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HAGARISM

The Making of the Islamic World

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HAGARISM

THE MAKING OF THE ISLAMIC WORLD

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PREFACE

Islamic civilisation is the only one in the world which went through its formative period later than the first millennium B.C. Its emergence thus constitutes an unusual, and for a number of related reasons a peculiar, historical event. This book is an attempt to make sense of it.

In making the attempt we have adopted an approach which differs appreciably from that of more conventional writing in the field. First, our account of the formation of Islam as a religion is radically new, or more precisely it is one which has been out of fashion since the seventh century: it is based on the intensive use of a small number of contemporary non-Muslim sources the testimony of which has hitherto been disregarded.* Secondly, we have expended a good deal of energy, both scholastic and intellectual, on taking seriously the obvious fact that the formation of Islamic civilisation took place in the world of late antiquity, and what is more in a rather distinctive part of it. Finally, we have set out with a certain recklessness to create a coherent architectonic of ideas in a field over much of which scholarship has yet to dig the foundations.

It might not be superfluous for us to attempt a defence of this enterprise against the raised eyebrows of the specialist, but it would certainly be pointless: it is in the last resort by specialists that our work will be judged, and the judgment of specialists is not open to corruption by prefaces. What has been said should also suffice to warn the non-specialist what not to expect: this is a pioneering expedition through some very rough country, not a guided tour. There is however one particular group of readers who are in a special position. For although the characters who appear in our story are all of them dead, their descendants are very much alive.

In the first place, the account we have given of the origins of Islam is not one which any believing Muslim can accept: not because it in any way belittles the historical role of Muhammad, but because it presents him in a role quite different from that which he has taken on in the Islamic

* It follows, of course, that new discoveries of early material could dramatically confirm, modify or refute the positions we have taken up.

tradition. This is a book written by infidels for infidels, and it is based on what from any Muslim perspective must appear an inordinate regard for the testimony of infidel sources. Our account is not merely unacceptable; it is also one which any Muslim whose faith is as a grain of mustard seed should find no difficulty in rejecting.

In the second place, there is a good deal in this book that may be disliked by the Muslim who has lost his religious faith but retained his ancestral pride. What we wish to stress for such a reader is that the strong evaluative overtones of the language in which we have analysed the formation of Islamic civilisation do not add up to any simplistic judgment for or against. We have presented the formation of the new civilisation as a unique cultural achievement, and one to which the maraudings of our own barbarian ancestors offer no parallel whatever; but equally we have presented the achievement as one which carried with it extraordinary cultural costs, and it is above all the necessary linkage between the achievement and the costs that we have tried to elucidate.

In the course of our research we have been helped by a number of scholars and institutions. Dr Sebastian Brock, Mr G. R. Hawting and Dr M. J. Kister were kind enough to give us their comments on an earlier draft of Part One. Dr Brock, Dr P. J. Frandsen and Professor A. Scheiber assisted us over queries in areas of their specialist competence. Consultation of a rather inaccessible Syriac manuscript was made possible by a grant from the British Academy and greatly facilitated by the kindness of Father William Macomber and Dr J. C. J. Sanders. Professor Bernard Lewis was good enough to make available to us his translation of a Jewish apocalyptic poem prior to publication. The completion of our research was greatly helped in different ways by the Warburg Institute and the School of Oriental and African Studies.

Over and above these debts of execution, we would also like to put on record what we owe to two influences without which this book could hardly have been conceived. The first was our exposure to the sceptical approach of Dr John Wansbrough to the historicity of the Islamic tradition; without this influence the theory of Islamic origins set out in this book would never have occurred to us.† The second is the powerful and

† We also benefited from an exchange of views with Dr Wansbrough in a seminar held in the spring of 1974, and have made use of what we learnt then at a number of points in our argument. These debts are acknowledged in their proper places; such acknowledgements should be taken to indicate that the substance of the idea is not to be credited to us, not that the form in which it appears can be debited to Dr Wansbrough. Cf. his forthcoming *Quranic Studies: Sources and Methods of Scriptural Interpretation.*

suggestive analysis of cultural meaning displayed in the work of John Dunn; without it we might still have developed our account of the beginnings of Islam, but we would have had only the haziest notion what to do with it.

Finally, we would like to thank Professor J. B. Segal for teaching us Syriac, and Dr D. J. Kamhi for introducing us to the Talmud.

What goes without saying should in this case be said: none of those who have helped us bear any responsibility for the views expressed in this book.

P.C.
M.A.C.

Postscript: For a helpful survey covering most of the Syriac sources used in this book, see now S. P. Brock, 'Syriac Sources for Seventh-Century History', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 1976. For an occurrence of the phrase *ahl al-islām* in an inscription dated A.H. 71 which we overlooked at p. 8, see H. M. el-Hawary, 'The second oldest Islamic monument known', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 1932, p. 290. For a dating of the earliest Koran fragments which, though for our purposes not sufficiently precise, should have been cited at p. 18, see A. Grohmann, 'The problem of dating early Qur'ans', *Der Islam* 1958.

PART I

WHENCE ISLAM?

I

JUDEO-HAGARISM

Virtually all accounts of the early development of Islam take it as axiomatic that it is possible to elicit at least the outlines of the process from the Islamic sources. It is however well-known that these sources are not demonstrably early. There is no hard evidence for the existence of the Koran in any form before the last decade of the seventh century, and the tradition which places this rather opaque revelation in its historical context is not attested before the middle of the eighth. The historicity of the Islamic tradition is thus to some degree problematic: while there are no cogent internal grounds for rejecting it, there are equally no cogent external grounds for accepting it. In the circumstances it is not unreasonable to proceed in the usual fashion by presenting a sensibly edited version of the tradition as historical fact. But equally, it makes some sense to regard the tradition as without determinate historical content, and to insist that what purport to be accounts of religious events in the seventh century are utilisable only for the study of religious ideas in the eighth.[1] The Islamic sources provide plenty of scope for the implementation of these different approaches, but offer little that can be used in any decisive way to arbitrate between them. The only way out of the dilemma is thus to step outside the Islamic tradition altogether and start again.

If we choose to start again, we begin with the *Doctrina Iacobi*, a Greek anti-Jewish tract spawned by the Heraclean persecution.[2] It is cast in the form of a dialogue between Jews set in Carthage in the year 634; it was in all probability written in Palestine within a few years of that date.[3] At one point in the argument reference is made to current events in Palestine in the form of a letter from a certain Abraham, a Palestinian Jew.[4]

> A false prophet has appeared among the Saracens . . . They say that the prophet has appeared coming with the Saracens, and is proclaiming the advent of the anointed one who is to come [*tou erkhomenou Eleimmenou kai Khristou*]. I, Abraham, went off to Sykamina and referred the matter to an old man very well-versed in the Scriptures. I asked him: 'What is your view, master and teacher, of the prophet who has appeared among the Saracens?' He replied, groaning mightily: 'He is an impostor. Do the prophets come with sword and chariot?

Truly these happenings today are works of disorder . . . But you go off, Master Abraham, and find out about the prophet who has appeared.' So I, Abraham, made enquiries, and was told by those who had met him: 'There is no truth to be found in the so-called prophet, only bloodshed; for he says he has the keys of paradise, which is incredible.'

There are several points of interest in this account. One is the doctrine of the keys. It is not of course Islamic, but there are some slight indications that it was a doctrine which the Islamic tradition had been at pains to repress: there is a group of traditions in which the keys of paradise are sublimated into harmless metaphor,[5] and a Byzantine oath of abjuration of Islam mentions the belief that the Prophet was to hold the keys of paradise as part of the 'secret' doctrine of the Saracens.[6] The point is not of great intrinsic interest, but it does suggest that we have in the *Doctrina* a stratum of belief older than the Islamic tradition itself. Of greater historical significance is the fact that the Prophet is represented as alive at the time of the conquest of Palestine. This testimony is of course irreconcilable with the Islamic account of the Prophet's career, but it finds independent confirmation in the historical traditions of the Jacobites, Nestorians and Samaritans;[7] the doctrinal meaning of the discrepancy will be taken up later.[8]

But the really startling thing about the *Doctrina* is its report that the Prophet was preaching the advent of 'the anointed one who is to come'. That is to say the core of the Prophet's message, in the earliest testimony available to us outside the Islamic tradition, appears as Judaic messianism. The idea is hardly a familiar one, but again it is strikingly confirmed by independent evidence.[9]

There is in the first place a Jewish apocalypse of the mid-eighth century, the 'Secrets of Rabbi Simon ben Yoḥay', which preserves a messianic interpretation of the Arab conquest.[10] Since the messiah belongs at the end of an apocalypse and not in the middle, this interpretation is likely to derive from an earlier apocalypse written soon after the events to which it refers.[11] The relevant passage is as follows:[12]

When he saw the kingdom of Ishmael that was coming, he began to say: 'Was it not enough, what the wicked kingdom of Edom did to us, but we must have the kingdom of Ishmael too?' At once Metatron the prince of the countenance answered and said: 'Do not fear, son of man, for the Holy One, blessed be He, only brings the kingdom of Ishmael in order to save you from this wickedness. He raises up over them a Prophet according to His will and will conquer the land for them and they will come and restore it in greatness, and there will be great terror between them and the sons of Esau.' Rabbi Simon answered and said: 'How do we know that they are our salvation?' He answered: 'Did not the Prophet Isaiah say thus: "And he saw a troop with a pair of horesemen, etc."?[13] Why did he put the troop of asses before the troop of camels, when he need only have

said: "A troop of camels and a troop of asses"? But when he, the rider on the camel,[14] goes forth the kingdom will arise through the rider on an ass. Again: "a troop of asses", since he rides on an ass, shows that they are the salvation of Israel, like the salvation of the rider on an ass.'

In addition, the 'Secrets' contains some references to the Kenite of Num. 24:21 which are intelligible only as the residue of an alternative messianic interpretation of the conquest.[15]

Now it is in no way surprising that a Jewish apocalypse of the time should present the invasion which terminated Roman rule in Palestine as a positive event in the eschatological drama, and it is as such that it appears in another such composition, the apocalyptic poem 'On that day'.[16] But the author of the passage quoted from the 'Secrets' does more than this: he presents the role of the Ishmaelites and their prophet as intrinsic to the messianic events themselves. This interpretation makes sense when set alongside the testimony of the *Doctrina* that the Prophet was in fact proclaiming the advent of the messiah, and at the same time provides independent confirmation of its authenticity. It may of course seem strange that Jews should accept the credentials of a presumably Arabian prophet as harbinger of the messiah; but there was good Judaic precedent for the performance of an Arab in this role.[17]

The other direct confirmation of the messianism of the *Doctrina* is to be found fossilised in the Islamic tradition, and incidentally reveals to us the identity of the messiah himself: 'Umar,[18] the second caliph of the Islamic schema retains even there the messianic designation *al-fārūq*, the Redeemer.[19] At the same time his entry into Jerusalem is an appropriate performance in this role,[20] while the 'Secrets' would seem to have him engage in the equally messianic task of restoring the Temple.[21] 'Umar's embarrassing by-name was not of course left unglossed in the Islamic tradition. When eventually the original Aramaic sense of the term had been successfully forgotten, it acquired a harmless Arabic etymology and was held to have been conferred by the Prophet himself. An earlier view attempted a historical rather than an etymological evasion: it was the people of the book who called 'Umar the *fārūq*, and the appellation somehow slipped onto the tongues of the Muslims.[22] Detailed historical accounts of the way in which an innocently curious 'Umar was hailed in Syria as the *fārūq*[23] are accordingly balanced by the attribution to him of acts which emphatically deny his role as a Judaic redeemer.[24] It is ironic that the inevitable attribution of everything to the Prophet is in this instance probably right. For if there is contemporary evidence that the Prophet was preaching the coming of the messiah, it can hardly be fortuitous that the man who subsequently came bears even in the Islamic tradition a transparently messianic title.

We have so far confined our attention to the messianic aspect of the conquest of Palestine; but as might be expected, the sources provide indications of a wider intimacy in the relations of Arabs and Jews at the time. The warmth of the Jewish reaction to the Arab invasion attested by the *Doctrina*[25] and exemplified by the 'Secrets' is far less in evidence in later Jewish attitudes.[26] More significantly, it is entirely absent from those of contemporary Christians, whether Orthodox[27] or heretical.[28] At the same time the sources attest the translation of these philo-Arab sentiments into concrete political involvement: the *Doctrina* refers to 'the Jews who mix with the Saracens',[29] while according to an early Armenian source the governor of Jerusalem in the aftermath of the conquest was a Jew.[30]

This evidence of Judeo-Arab intimacy is complemented by indications of a marked hostility towards Christianity on the part of the invaders. The converted Jew of the *Doctrina* protests that he will not deny Christ, the son of God, even if the Jews and Saracens catch him and cut him to pieces.[31] The Christian garrison of Gaza put the same determination into practice, and was martyred for it.[32] A contemporary sermon includes among the misdeeds of the Saracens the burning of churches, the destruction of monasteries, the profanation of crosses, and horrific blasphemies against Christ and the church.[33] A violent Saracen hatred of the cross is also attested in an early account of the arrival of the invaders on Mt Sinai.[34] And the doctrinal corollary of all this finds neat expression when the Armenian source mentioned above has an early Ishmaelite ruler call upon the Byzantine emperor to renounce 'that Jesus whom you call Christ and who could not even save himself from the Jews'.[35] There is nothing here to bear out the Islamic picture of a movement which had already broken with the Jews before the conquest, and regarded Judaism and Christianity with the same combination of tolerance and reserve.

What the materials examined so far do not provide is a concrete picture of the way in which this Judeo-Arab involvement might have come about. For this we have to turn to the earliest connected account of the career of the Prophet, that given in an Armenian chronicle written in the 660s and ascribed to Bishop Sebeos.[36] The story begins with the exodus of Jewish refugees from Edessa following its recovery by Heraclius from the Persians towards 628:

> They set out into the desert and came to Arabia, among the children of Ishmael; they sought their help, and explained to them that they were kinsmen according to the Bible. Although they [the Ishmaelites] were ready to accept this close kinship, they [the Jews] nevertheless could not convince the mass of the people, because their cults were different. At this time there was an Ishmaelite called Mahmēt,[37] a merchant; he presented himself to them as though at God's command, as a preacher, as the way of truth, and taught them to know the God

of Abraham, for he was very well-informed, and very well-acquainted with the story of Moses. As the command came from on high, they all united under the authority of a single man, under a single law, and, abandoning vain cults, returned to the living God who had revealed Himself to their father Abraham. Mahmēt forbade them to eat the flesh of any dead animal, to drink wine,[38] to lie or to fornicate. He added: 'God has promised this land to Abraham and his posterity after him forever; he acted according to His promise while he loved Israel. Now you, you are the sons of Abraham and God fulfills in you the promise made to Abraham and his posterity. Only love the God of Abraham, go and take possession of your country which God gave to your father Abraham, and none will be able to resist you in the struggle, for God is with you.' Then they all gathered together from Havilah unto Shur and before Egypt [Gen. 25:18]; they came out of the desert of Pharan divided into twelve tribes according to the lineages of their patriarchs. They divided among their tribes the twelve thousand Israelites, a thousand per tribe, to guide them into the land of Israel. They set out, camp by camp, in the order of their patriarchs: Nebajoth, Kedar, Abdeel, Mibsam, Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadar, Tema, Jetur, Naphish and Kedemah [Gen. 25:13–15]. These are the tribes of Ishmael ... All that remained of the peoples of the children of Israel came to join them, and they constituted a mighty army. Then they sent an embassy to the emperor of the Greeks, saying: 'God has given this land as a heritage to our father Abraham and his posterity after him; we are the children of Abraham; you have held our country long enough; give it up peacefully, and we will not invade your territory; otherwise we will retake with interest what you have taken.'

This version of the origins of Islam is an unfamiliar one. It is also manifestly ahistorical in its admixture of Biblical ethnography and demonstrably wrong in the role it ascribes to the Jewish refugees from Edessa. This role, quite apart from its geographical implausibility, is in effect chronologically impossible: it means that Muḥammad's polity could hardly have been founded much before 628, whereas as early as 643 we have documentary evidence that the Arabs were using an era beginning in 622.[39] Persian-occupied Palestine would be a far more plausible starting-point for the Jewish refugees than Edessa.[40] This need not however invalidate the picture which Sebeos gives of the structure of Jewish-Arab relations in the period leading up to the conquest, and the authenticity of this account is in fact strikingly confirmed from a rather unexpected quarter. In contrast to the standard Islamic account of the relations between Muḥammad and the Jewish tribes of Medina, the Jews appear in the document known as the 'Constitution of Medina' as forming one community (*umma*) with the believers despite the retention of their own religion, and are distributed nameless among a number of Arab tribes.[41] Since this document is a patently anomalous and plausibly archaic element of the Islamic tradition, its agreement in these respects with the earliest narrative account of the origins of Islam is highly significant. Sebeos can therefore be accepted as

providing the basic narrative framework within which the closeness of Judeo-Arab relations established earlier in this chapter belongs.

What Sebeos has to say is also of considerable doctrinal interest in its own right. In the first place he provides a clear statement of the Palestinian orientation of the movement, a feature implicit in the messianic scenario and independently attested in the Jacobite historical tradition;[42] it is of course in some tension with the insistence of the Islamic tradition that the religious metropolis of the invaders was, already at the time of the conquest, identified with Mecca rather than Jerusalem.[43] More specifically, the presentation of the movement as an irredentism directed to the recovery of a divinely conferred birthright to the Promised Land is suggestive of the messianic in-gathering of the exiles. Equally the exodus into the desert with which the story begins can plausibly be seen as the enactment of a well-established messianic fantasy.[44] At the same time this role of the desert, taken with the toponymic evocation of the original Israelite conquest of the Land[45] and the statement that the Prophet was well-acquainted with the *story* of Moses, is strongly suggestive of the rabbinic parallelism between the Mosaic and messianic redemptions:[46] the emphasis is, in other words, Mosaic rather than Davidic. Thus Sebeos, without directly attesting the messianic theme, helps to provide a doctrinal context in which it is thoroughly at home.

But Sebeos also offers something entirely absent from the sources examined so far: an account of the way in which the Prophet provided a rationale for *Arab* involvement in the enactment of Judaic messianism. This rationale consists in a dual invocation of the Abrahamic descent of the Arabs as Ishmaelites: on the one hand to endow them with a birthright to the Holy Land,[47] and on the other to provide them with a monotheist genealogy. Neither invocation was without precedent.[48] But if the message was hardly a very original one, it already contained, alongside the rationale for Ishmaelite participation in an Israelite exodus, the germ of an Arab religious identity distinct from that of their Jewish mentors and protégés.

There is no good reason to suppose that the bearers of this primitive identity called themselves 'Muslims'. The earliest datable occurrence of this term is in the Dome of the Rock of 691f;[49] it is not otherwise attested outside the Islamic literary tradition until far into the eighth century.[50] Our sources do however reveal an earlier designation of the community, and one which fits well with the context of ideas presented by Sebeos. This designation appears in Greek as 'Magaritai' in a papyrus of 642, and in Syriac as 'Mahgre' or 'Mahgraye' from as early as the 640s;[51] the corresponding Arabic term is *muhājirūn*.[52] There are two notions involved

here. The first, rather lost in the Islamic tradition,[53] is genealogical: the 'Mahgraye', as an early Syriac source informs us, are the descendants of Abraham by Hagar.[54] But alongside this ascribed status there is also an attained one which is fully preserved in the Islamic tradition: the *muhājirūn* are those who take part in a *hijra*, an exodus.[55]

In the Islamic tradition the exodus in question is from Mecca to Medina, and its date is identified with the inception of the Arab era in 622. But no early source attests the historicity of this exodus,[56] and the sources examined in this chapter provide a plausible alternative in the emigration of the Ishmaelites from Arabia to the Promised Land. Two points are worth adducing here in favour of this alternative. In the first place, the *muhājirūn* of the Islamic tradition are by the time of the invasion of Palestine only the leading element of the conquering religious community; and yet the Greek and Syriac sources use the terms 'Magaritai' and 'Mahgraye' with every appearance of referring to the community as a whole.[57] Secondly, the Islamic tradition preserves examples of the use of *hijra* and related terms in contexts where the emigration is not within Arabia but from Arabia to the conquered territories.[58] There is even a tradition which by implication narrows the destination to Palestine: there will be *hijra* after *hijra*, but the best of men are to follow the *hijra* of Abraham.[59] The 'Mahgraye' may thus be seen as Hagarene participants in a *hijra* to the Promised Land, and in this pun lies the earliest identity of the faith which was in the fullness of time to become Islam.

2

HAGARISM WITHOUT JUDAISM

The mutual understanding that 'you can be in my dream if I can be in yours' may have provided a viable basis for an alliance of Jews and Arabs in the wilderness. But when the Jewish messianic fantasy was enacted in the form of an Arab conquest of the Holy Land, political success was in itself likely to prove doctrinally embarrassing. Sooner rather than later, the mixture of Israelite redemption and Ishmaelite genealogy was going to curdle. For inherent in the messianic programme was the question once put to Jesus of Nazareth: 'Lord, wilt thou now restore the kingdom to Israel?' Jesus, of course, had been excellently placed to evade the question, and his followers had proceeded to shape a religion around this evasion. But the very success of the Arabs precluded a gradual dissociation from Jewish messianism, and required instead a sharp and immediate break.

The context in which this break actually occurred may well have been the central symbolic act of the messianic programme, the restoration of the Temple. On the one hand we have the readiness of the early sources to speak of Arab building activity on the site as restoring the Temple,[1] which at least suggests that this is what the Arabs originally took themselves to be doing; and in particular, we have the statement of the 'Secrets' that the second king who arises from Ishmael will be a lover of Israel who 'restores their breaches and the breaches of the temple'.[2] But on the other hand we have the account given by Sebeos of an overt quarrel between Jews and Arabs over the possession of the site of the Holy of Holies, in which the Arabs frustrate a Jewish design to restore the Temple and build their own oratory there instead.[3] It is not unlikely that the 'Secrets' and Sebeos are referring to successive phases of Judeo-Arab relations.[4] But Sebeos places his account of the break in the immediate aftermath of the first wave of conquests;[5] the days of the messiah seem at all events to have been pretty short-lived.[6]

The first thing the Hagarenes needed in this predicament was a rationale for the break with Jewish messianism. The Islamic tradition preserves some evidence of Hagarene inventiveness in this context: we have already seen the manner in which the designation of 'Umar as 'Redeemer' was rendered innocuous, and we shall come later to the curious fate of the

corresponding notion of 'redemption'.[7] But significant as such shifts may have been, they were also somewhat superfluous. The problem had long ago been faced and solved in a very different style by the Christians.

As the Hagarenes broke with their erstwhile Jewish protégés and acquired large numbers of Christian subjects, their initial hostility to Christianity was clearly liable to erosion. Thus Isho'yahb III, Nestorian Catholicus *c.* 647–58, comments on the highly benevolent attitude of the Arabs towards the church,[8] while another Nestorian writing in the Jazīra in the last decade of the century recollects that the invaders had had an order from their leader in favour of the Christians.[9] At the same time a Coptic life of Patriarch Isaac of Rakoti attests the idyllic relations that obtained between him and the governor 'Abd al-'Azīz b. Marwān in the 680s, and the latter's love of the Christians.[10] Against this background, a certain doctrinal softening towards the person of Jesus himself was to be expected. Already in an account of a disputation between a Christian patriarch and a Hagarene emir which probably took place in 644,[11] the emir appears neither to reject nor to affirm the messianic status of Jesus.[12] But the clearest evidence of this softening is to be found in the account preserved in a fragment of an early Maronite chronicle of Mu'āwiya's actions on becoming 'king' in Jerusalem in 659: he proceeds to pray at Golgotha, Gethsemane and the grave of the Virgin, a behavioural endorsement of the redemptive death of Christ.[13] This of course is more than the Islamic tradition was to concede: Islam has no notion of Jesus as a saviour, and despite its acceptance of his messianic status, it contrives to perpetuate the early Hagarene hatred of the cross through a clever invocation of Docetism.[14] Mu'āwiya himself, according to the same Maronite source, attempted to issue coins without the cross.[15] But it is the recognition of Jesus as the messiah, already implicit in Mu'āwiya's devotions and explicit in the Koran,[16] that concerns us here.

The most interesting attestation of this recognition occurs in a letter of Jacob of Edessa (d.*c.* 708) on the genealogy of the Virgin:[17]

> That the messiah is of Davidic descent, everyone professes, the Jews, the Mahgraye and the Christians . . . That the messiah is, in the flesh, of Davidic descent . . . is thus professed by all of them, Jews, Mahgraye and Christians, and regarded by them as something fundamental . . . The Mahgraye too . . . all confess firmly that he [Jesus] is the true messiah who was to come and who was foretold by the prophets; on this subject they have no dispute with us, but rather with the Jews. They reproachfully maintain against them . . . that the messiah was to be born of David, and further that this messiah who has come was born of Mary. This is firmly professed by the Mahgraye, and not one of them will dispute it, for they say always and to everyone that Jesus son of Mary is in truth the messiah.

The significance of this passage relates less to the content than to the manner of the belief. It enables us to see in the rather inert and perfunctory Koranic recognition of Jesus as messiah the residue of a basic Hagarene tenet vigorously maintained in controversy with the Jews. The point of such a tenet is obvious enough. In the figure of Jesus Christianity offered a messiah fully disengaged from the political fortunes of the Jews. All the Hagarenes had to do to rid themselves of their own messianic incubus was to borrow the messiah of the Christians.

Where the exchange of a Judaic for a Christian messianism was less helpful to the Hagarenes was in the development of a positive religious identity of their own. The harder they leant on Christianity to dissociate themselves from the Jews, the greater the danger that they would simply end up by becoming Christians like the majority of their subjects. In conceptual terms the key to their suvival lay in the primitive religious identity already delineated in Judeo-Hagarism, and in particular in the Prophet's invocation of the God of Abraham in order to present an alien monotheism to the Arabs as their ancestral faith.[18] From this starting-point the Hagarenes went on to elaborate a full-scale religion of Abraham.

The *idea* of a religion of Abraham is of course prominent in the Koran. It is clearly presented as an autonomous religion (16:124, 22:77); and its founder is not only categorised as a prophet (19:42, cf. Gen. 20:7), he is also for the first time endowed with a scripture, the *Ṣuḥuf Ibrāhīm* (53:35f, 87:18f). The doctrinal resources of this faith extend to a scripturally ambiguous but essentially revivalist role for Muḥammad himself (2:123), and it also seems to have provided the primary context for the development of the notion of *islām*.[19] But the only point at which the Koranic religion of Abraham retains any *practical* plausibility is the account of his foundation, in conjunction with Ishmael[20], of what the Islamic tradition was to identify as the Meccan sanctuary (2:118ff).[21]

What is missing in the Koranic data is the sense of an integral and concrete project for a Hagarene faith. It is a Christian source which makes good this loss by introducing the notion of Abraham's 'commandments' – also alluded to in the 'Secrets'[22] – and by identifying them as circumcision and sacrifice. This late Umayyad text, a Syriac disputation between a monk of Bet Ḥale and a follower of the emir Maslama,[23] includes the following exchange:[24]

THE ARAB: Why don't you believe in Abraham and his commandments, when he is the father of prophets and kings, and scripture testifies to his righteousness?

THE MONK: What sort of belief in Abraham do you expect from us, and what are these commandments which you want us to observe?

THE ARAB: Circumcision and sacrifice, because he received them from God.[25]

Two other sources provide partial parallels to this Hagarene espousal of circumcision and sacrifice under an Abrahamic sanction. The first is an exchange of letters said to have taken place between 'Umar II and the emperor Leo III as it appears in the Armenian chronicle of Levond.[26] Here one of 'Umar's reproaches against the Christians is that they have arbitrarily changed all the laws, turning circumcision into baptism and sacrifice into eucharist.[27] The other source is a prophecy of the exodus of the Hagarenes from the desert attributed to St Ephraim, in which they are described as a people 'which holds to the covenant of Abraham'.[28]

Now the identification of the cultic pillars of the religion of Abraham as circumcision and sacrifice has two interesting implications. The first concerns the relationship of this faith to Islam. It is of course true that the *elements* of the Abrahamic cult survive into the Islamic tradition.[29] But they have lost their original centrality:[30] there is a tendency for sacrifice to be absorbed into ritual slaughter,[31] and there are even doubts as to the necessity of circumcision.[32] Equally, except in the special case of sacrifice in the religious metropolis, the patriarchal rationale for these practices is far less in evidence. We are thus faced with a general dissipation of the *structure* of the religion of Abraham in Islam, a point the significance of which will be taken up later.[33]

Secondly, both circumcision and sacrifice are attested in pre-Islamic Arabia,[34] and there is thus a certain presumption that it is there that the origin of the Hagarene practices is to be sought. In the case of sacrifice, moreover, this presumption is reinforced by a further consideration. The Christian sources indicate sacrifice to have been a standard cultic practice in Syria. Thus the Jacobite patriarch Athanasius of Balad, in a letter of 684 regarding the religious dangers of Christian intercourse with the conquerors, is particularly concerned to stop Christians eating the sacrifices of the 'pagans';[35] and Jacob of Edessa, in the course of some curious observations on the religious malpractices of the Armenians, mentions that the Arabs practice circumcision and make three genuflexions to the south when sacrificing.[36] Now sacrifice outside the religious metropolis, whatever its Abrahamic scriptural sanction,[37] could not in practice be a borrowing from one of the older monotheisms. There are thus grounds for seeing in Hagarene circumcision and sacrifice the perpetuation of pagan practice under a new Abrahamic aegis.[38]

What this suggests is that the role of Abraham in the early development of Hagarism was not simply to give an ancestral status to monotheist theory; it was also to confer a monotheist status on ancestral practice. This is surely the context which gave Islam the curious term *ḥanīf*, so

closely associated with Abraham and his faith: by borrowing a word which meant 'pagan' in the vocabulary of the Fertile Crescent, and using it to designate an adherent of an unsophisticated Abrahamic monotheism, the Hagarenes contrived to make a religious virtue of the stigma of their pagan past.[39] At the same time we can discern in this trend the beginnings of the far-reaching reorientation whereby the origins of Islam came to be seen in an elaborate and organic relationship to a real or imagined pagan heritage.

The religion of Abraham provided some sort of answer to the question how the Hagarenes could enter the monotheist world without losing their identity in either of its major traditions. But in itself it was too simple and threadbare a notion to generate the basic religious structures which such a will to independence required. The faith which had most to offer the Hagarenes at this level was Samaritanism. The Samaritans had faced the problem of dissociation from Judaism before the Christians, and without ever being absorbed by them. They had also solved the problem in a style very different from that of the Christians, and a good deal more relevant to the immediate needs of the Hagarenes: where the Christians sublimated the Judaic categories into metaphor, the Samaritans replaced them with concrete alternatives.[40] Given this basic affinity, a Hagarene reception of Samaritan ideas was facilitated conceptually by the prominence of Moses in both Judeo-Hagarism[41] and Samaritanism, and politically by the very innocuousness of the Samaritan community.[42]

The earliest Hagarene borrowing from the Samaritans of which we have evidence is their scriptural position. At one point in the disputation between the patriarch and the emir referred to above,[43] the emir demands to be told how it is that, if the Gospel is one, the Christian sects differ among themselves in matters of belief. The patriarch replies:[44]

> Just as the Pentateuch is one and the same, and is accepted by us Christians and by you Mahgraye, and by the Jews and the Samaritans, and each community is divided in faith; so also with the faith of the Gospel, each heresy understands and interprets it differently.

Hagarism is thus classed as a Pentateuchal religion.[45] Later the discussion shifts to the divinity of Christ and his status as son of God, and the emir demands proof from the Pentateuch. The patriarch replies with a barrage of unspecified scriptural citations, the weight of which was clearly prophetic. It is the emir's reaction at this point that is crucial:[46].

> The illustrious emir did not accept these from the prophets, but demanded [that] Moses [be cited] to prove to him that the messiah was God.

To accept the Pentateuch and reject the prophets is the Samaritan scriptural

position.

Adherence to this scriptural position can also be detected in some passages of Levond's version of the correspondence between 'Umar and Leo.[47] One of 'Umar's questions is this:[48]

> Why does one not find in the laws of Moses anything about heaven, hell, the Last Judgment or the resurrection? It is the Evangelists . . . who have spoken of these things according to their own understanding.[49]

To this Leo replies with an exposition of the gradual unfolding of the divine revelation, insisting that God did not speak to men once only through a single prophet, and denying his interrogator's position that 'everything vouchsafed by God to the human race was revealed through Moses'.[50] Alongside this Mosaic fundamentalism may be set the disparagement of the prophets that appears in another of 'Umar's questions:[51]

> Why do you not accept all that Jesus says about himself, but search the writings of the prophets and the psalms with a view to finding testimonies to the incarnation of Jesus? You . . . are dissatisfied with what Jesus testified about himself, but believe in what the prophets said. But Jesus was truly worthy of belief, was close to God, and knew himself more closely than writings distorted and perverted by peoples unknown to you.

In each case, the tendency on the Hagarene side is clearly towards the Samaritan scriptural position.[52] The way in which the great Judaic prophets scarcely figure in the Koran is perhaps the Islamic residue of this doctrine.[53]

The Samaritan scriptural position had something to offer the Hagarenes on two levels. Specifically, it deleted the scriptural basis of the Davidic component of Judaic messianism – neither the legitimacy of the Davidic monarchy nor the sanctity of Jerusalem are attested in the Pentateuch;[54] and at the same time, it did something to reinforce the patriarchal emphasis of the religion of Abraham. More generally, the espousal of the Pentateuch without the prophets defined an attitude to the question of religious authority, at least in its scriptural form, which was polemically viable in the monotheist world.[55]

The Hagarenes had thus found solutions to the most pressing problems they faced in the aftermath of the break with Judaism. Their religion of Abraham established who they were, their Christian messianism helped to emphasise who they were not, and their scriptural position, in addition to helping out with messianism, endowed them with a sort of elementary doctrinal literacy, a line to shoot. The trouble was that these solutions were utterly inconsistent with one another.

3

THE PROPHET LIKE MOSES

The combination of the religion of Abraham with an instrumental Christian messianism was in itself a curious one, and the adjunction of the Samaritan scriptural position did nothing to render it more plausible. On the one hand the rejection of the prophets, by the very neatness with which it excised the scriptural basis of Davidic messianism, made nonsense of the recognition of the Christian messiah; and on the other, the recognition of the Pentateuch alone meant a Mosaic dominance which went badly with the notion of a religion of Abraham. But the root of the trouble was that the Hagarenes had not yet faced up to the basic dilemma of their religious predicament. They had begun with an uneasy combination of Israelite redemption and Ishmaelite genealogy; the specific content of each term might change, but the fundamental problem remained that of making an alien religious truth their own. There were really only two solutions. On the one hand they could proceed after the manner of the Ethiopian Christians, that is to say by themselves adopting Israelite descent. But in view of the play they had already made of their Ishmaelite ancestry, it is hardly surprising that they should have clung to it throughout their entire doctrinal evolution. On the other hand, if they would not go to the truth, the truth might perhaps be persuaded to come to them. On the foundation of their Ishmaelite genealogy, they had to erect a properly Ishmaelite prophetology. It was a daring move for so religiously parvenu a nation, but it was the only way out.

The initial doctrinal adaptions analysed in the previous chapter had left Muḥammad himself distinctly underemployed. The repression of messianism had reduced his mission to that of a monotheist preacher of rather ill-defined status. It was possible to give this status more precise definition by invoking the notion of a revivalist messenger sent to restore the religion of Abraham.[1] But from the materials preserved in the Koran, it would appear that the predominant trend was to align the Prophet with a series of non-scriptural warners sent to gentile peoples.[2] That this archaic model reflects a significant doctrinal stratum is suggested on the one hand by the frequency and relative lucidity of its presentation,[3] and on the other by the pull which it exercises even on the figure of Moses.[4] The key

to its attractiveness must have lain in its combination of simplicity and evasion: the reduction of the message to a mere warning delivered in a parochial ethnic context obviated the need to define its relationship to the wider domain of monotheist revelation.

It was just this relationship that stood in need of definition if an Ishmaelite prophetology was to be created. The Arabian warner had to advance beyond his comfortably parochial role into the dizzy heights of scriptural revelation: he had now to be aligned, not with Hūd and Ṣāliḥ, but with the Moses of Mt Sinai. Two features of the Mosaic complex facilitated this alignment. The first was the ease with which it is possible to shift within the Mosaic paradigm from redemption to revelation, the Red Sea to Sinai. It was not difficult to see Muḥammad in the Mosaic role of the leader of an exodus, and there was therefore no reason why he should not complete the performance by receiving revelation on an appropriate sacred mountain.[5] This shift of emphasis is elegantly caught in the contrasting formulations of the relationship of Muḥammad to Moses given by two Armenian chroniclers: for the early Sebeos, Muḥammad is well-acquainted with the *story* of Moses, while for the late Samuel of Ani he is imperfectly acquainted with the *law* of Moses.[6] But the most striking attestation of the shift is the curious semantic evolution of the term *furqān*, from its original Aramaic sense of 'redemption' to its secondary Arabic sense of 'revelation':[7] in the image of Is. 21:7, the salvation of the rider on the ass had been transmuted into the scripture of the rider on the camel.[8]

The other helpful feature of the Mosaic complex was the Deuteronomic promise of a 'prophet like Moses'.[9] The Koran itself is too modest to cast the Prophet in this role: indeed it presents his revelation as a mere Arabic attestation of that of Moses (46:11 etc.). But the *Sīra* provides clear instances of the identification of Muḥammad as the Deuteronomic prophet.[10] The Mosaic complex thus provided both the model and the sanction for the recasting of Muḥammad as the bearer of a new revelation.

Where the Hagarenes had to fend for themselves was in composing an actual sacred book for their prophet, less alien than that of Moses and more real than that of Abraham.[11] No early source sheds any direct light on the questions how and when this was accomplished. With regard to the manner of composition, there is some reason to suppose that the Koran was put together out of a plurality of earlier Hagarene religious works. In the first place, this early plurality is attested in a number of ways. On the Islamic side, the Koran itself gives obscure indications that the integrity of the scripture was problematic,[12] and with this we may compare the allegation against 'Uthmān that the Koran had been many books of which he had left only one.[13] On the Christian side, the monk of Bet Ḥale distinguishes pointedly between the Koran and the *Sūrat al-baqara* as sources of law,[14]

while Levond has the emperor Leo describe how Ḥajjāj destroyed the old Hagarene 'writings'.[15] Secondly, there is the internal evidence of the literary character of the Koran. The book is strikingly lacking in overall structure, frequently obscure and inconsequential in both language and content, perfunctory in its linking of disparate materials, and given to the repetition of whole passages in variant versions. On this basis it can plausibly be argued that the book is the product of the belated and imperfect editing of materials from a plurality of traditions.[16]

At the same time the imperfection of the editing suggests that the emergence of the Koran must have been a sudden, not to say hurried, event. But again, there is no direct early testimony as to the date of this event.[17] The Dome of the Rock does attest the existence, at the end of the seventh century, of materials immediately recognisable as Koranic in a text that not infrequently coincides with our own;[18] but it does not of course give any indication of the literary form in which these materials normally appeared at the time. The earliest reference from outside the Islamic literary tradition to a book called the Koran occurs in the late Umayyad dialogue between the Arab and the monk of Bet Ḥale;[19] but as we have seen, it may have differed considerably in content from the Koran we now know. In any case, with the single exception of a passage in the dialogue between the patriarch and the emir which *might* be construed as an implicit reference to the Koranic law of inheritance,[20] there is no indication of the existence of the Koran before the end of the seventh century. Now both Christian and Muslim sources attribute some kind of role to Ḥajjāj in the history of Muslim scripture. In the account attributed to Leo by Levond, Ḥajjāj is said to have collected and destroyed the old Hagarene writings and replaced them with others composed according to his own tastes;[21] the Muslim traditions are more restrained, though far from uniform.[22] It is thus not unlikely that we have here the historical context in which the Koran was first put together as Muḥammad's scripture.

Once Muḥammad was established in the role of a Mosaic scriptural prophet, the identity of the new faith was finally secure. In the first place, a shift from a prophetology more reactionary than Judaism to one more progressive than Christianity brought the older monotheist religions into a more comfortable perspective. The Mosaic presence receded somewhat,[23] and the Torah according to one tradition was deferentially dumped in Lake Tiberias.[24] Equally the Hagarenes were now in a position to recognise the prophets of the Judaic canon,[25] and to extend the role of Jesus by aligning him between Moses and Muḥammad in a succession of great lawgivers on the Mosaic model.[26] Secondly, the problem of the nationalisation of prophecy had received as effective a solution as it was ever to get.[27] The appearance of a full-blooded Ishmaelite in the role of the final

lawgiver of religious history resolved the worst of the tension between alien truth and native identity. At the same time the boldness of this solution rendered the religion of Abraham, with its timid espousal of the last prophet that Ishmael could legitimately share with Israel, conceptually otiose.[28] As its structure went into dissolution, its cultic prescriptions gave way to the less atavistic pillars of the religion of Muḥammad.[29] All in all, the new faith was now secure enough in its distance from its Judaic origins to confront Judaism on its home ground: when ʿAbd al-Malik built the dome in which he proclaimed the prophetic mission of Muḥammad, he placed it over the temple rock itself.[30]

At the same time, the Samaritan and Abrahamic stepping-stones to the religion of Muḥammad endowed it with a category central to its status as an independent faith, that of *islām*.[31] The Samaritan contribution was the notion of *islām* in the sense of submission to God. The verb *aslama* has cognates in Hebrew, Aramaic and Syriac. But whereas neither Jewish nor Christian literature provides satisfactory precedent for the Islamic usage,[32] we find exact parallels in the most important Samaritan text of the pre-Islamic period.[33] It could of course be argued that this represents the contamination of the Samaritan textual tradition by Islamic influence; but in the case of *islām* this is unlikely, not least because the Samaritan usage, unlike the Islamic, is at home in a range of similar uses of the same and other roots.[34]

But if Samaritanism provided the Hagarenes with the notion of *islām*, it provides only a clue to the significance it was to acquire for them. The context of the idea in Samaritanism is patriarchal, and its leading example Abrahamic. The religion of Abraham was thus the most appropriate locus for the assimilation and development of the borrowing, and the Koranic material bears out this inference. In general, this material gives a strong sense of the paradigmatic status of Abraham's submission and of the central role of submission in his religion.[35] Specifically, the Koranic treatment of the binding of Isaac, the key example of Abrahamic submission, is accompanied by an interpretation which is characteristically Samaritan.[36]

This role of the religion of Abraham does something to explain the interest taken by the Hagarenes in a rather peripheral Samaritan notion; but it hardly accounts for the prominence achieved by this notion in Islam. There are two directions in which one might look for the challenge which evoked this response. In the first place, we clearly have to do with a general religious category defining the proper relationship between man and God which occupies a position analogous to that of the covenant in Judaism. The possibility thus arises of seeing in *islām* a development of the covenant of Abraham in the face of the challenge of the Mosaic covenant. This would at least make a certain sense of a very refractory

feature of the semantics of the term, the fact that the Koranic usage of *islām* and related forms frequently requires an intransitive sense, probably as primary. The most plausible sense of the root to invoke here is that of 'peace', and the sense of 'to make peace' is well-attested for the cognate of *aslama* in targumic Aramaic;[37] from this it can be argued that the primary sense of *islām* was entry into a covenant of peace.[38] If so, the reinterpretation of this conception in terms of the ultimately dominant sense of 'submission' can readily be seen as intended to differentiate the Hagarene covenant from that of Judaism.

But if *islām* is the conceptual rival of one Mosaic notion, it is also the historical successor of another. In early Hagarism the idea of 'exodus' had constituted the central duty of the faith, and at the same time provided its adherents with a name.[39] It was as if the central category of the religion of Moses had been a reference to the Red Sea. But when redemption became scripture, the Hagarenes needed a category more Sinaitic in scope. Hence *islām* replaced *hijra* as the fundamental religious duty,[40] and the 'Mahgraye' accordingly became Muslims.

4

THE SAMARITAN CALQUES

Judaism is among other things the religious sanction of a polity: the consecration of its capital, Jerusalem, and the legitimation of its state, the Davidic monarchy. The polity itself had long disappeared, but its memory remained, most vividly in the restorationist aspirations of messianism. Any religious movement dissociating itself from Judaism had perforce to exorcise the ghost of this polity.[1] The followers of Jesus had done so by rendering the meaning of the messiah and his city innocuously spiritual: a heavenly Jerusalem was good enough for a sect whose kingdom was not of this world.[2] But the Hagarenes, being in immediate possession of political power, required a solution of a more drastic and concrete character. It is here that the abiding structural legacy of Samaritanism to Islam is to be found, despite the complexities induced by a variety of secondary interactions, in the form of a remarkable pair of Hagarene calques.[3]

The first of these is the Meccan sanctuary. The core of Samaritanism was the rejection of the sanctity of Jerusalem and its replacement by the older Israelite sanctuary of Shechem. This meant that when the Hagarenes in turn disengaged from Jerusalem,[4] Shechem could provide a simple and appropriate model for the creation of a sanctuary of their own. The parallelism is striking. Each presents the same binary structure of a sacred city closely associated with a nearby holy mountain, and in each case the fundamental rite is a pilgrimage from the city to the mountain. In each case the sanctuary is an Abrahamic foundation, the pillar on which Abraham sacrificed in Shechem finding its equivalent in the *rukn* of the Meccan sanctuary.[5] Finally, the urban sanctuary is in each case closely associated with the grave of the appropriate patriarch: Joseph (as opposed to Judah) in the Samaritan case, Ishmael (as opposed to Isaac) in the Meccan.

These parallels are the more remarkable in that the Meccan sanctuary is clearly only the terminus of a complex development. In what follows we shall identify the major processes at work in this development, and attempt a speculative account of the way in which they may have interacted.

In the first place, the location of the Hagarene Shechem in Mecca is demonstrably secondary. The Islamic tradition, of course, leaves us in no doubt that Mecca was the aboriginal Abrahamic sanctuary of the Ishma-

elites; but there is no lack of evidence to suggest that it was in fact quite some time before the Hagarenes knew whether they were coming or going.[6] Negatively, no early source outside the Islamic literary tradition refers to Mecca by name. On the face of it the earliest references are those found in one Syriac version of the apocalypse of pseudo-Methodius; but although the apocalypse itself dates from the late seventh century, the references to Mecca which distinguish this version are likely to be secondary.[7] The next Christian reference occurs in the 'Continuatio Byzantia Arabica',[8] a source dating from early in the reign of Hishām.[9] The Koran, on the other hand, does make one reference to Mecca (48:24), and in the context of military operations related to the sanctuary, but it never actually locates the sanctuary there;[10] and it refers to an abrogated *qibla* which in the context can hardly be identified as Jerusalem (2:138).

Positively, the Koran itself tells us the name of the place where the sanctuary actually was: Bakka (3:90). The Islamic tradition is naturally at pains to identify this place with Mecca,[11] and none of our sources shed any light on its original location. There is, however, one source of uncertain date, the Samaritan Aramaic text known as the *Asāṭīr*, which suggests that the name Bakka may be the residue of an archaic phase in the search for a Hagarene sanctuary. According to this text, the children of Nebajoth built Mecca, as it is written: 'as thou goest (*b'ḳḥ*) towards Assyria, before all his brethren he fell' (Gen. 25:18).[12] The *b'ḳḥ* of this verse, read *bāḳā* in Samaritan Hebrew,[13] is a clear reference to the place we know from the Koran as Bakka, and the context of the verse links it neatly with the death of Ishmael. This strained exercise in Biblical philology might of course be nothing more than an instance of inveterate Samaritan antiquarianism. But it may also be that we have here the residue of a Hagarene attempt to procure from their Samaritan mentors a Pentateuchal sanction for a Hagarene sanctuary.[14]

It thus makes sense to scan the map of western Arabia for possible traces of discarded sanctuaries, and a number of places present interesting features in this context. In the Ḥijāz itself, the evidence is highly unsatisfactory in that it derives almost entirely from the Islamic tradition. There are nevertheless two places worth noting: Yathrib, to which we shall return,[15] and Ṭā'if. Ṭā'if presents one suspicious parallelism with Shechem in that both (in contrast to Mecca) are sanctuaries located in famously green environments;[16] and it is the subject of one suspicious Islamic tradition, to the effect that it had once been a place in Palestine.[17]

Further north the quality of the evidence improves, although the problems still evade neat solution. We now reach an area for which Jewish settlement is well attested in pre-Islamic times, and for which a sacred geography had already been sketched out in the Jewish Targums. Here, in

contrast to the deep south, the Hagarenes did not have to start from scratch – one reason why it was a good place to start.

Through their habit of up-dating Biblical place-names, the Targums provided versions of Genesis in which the wanderings of the key figures – Abraham, Hagar and Ishmael – were transposed onto north-west Arabia.[18] In the first place, some of these targumic renderings provided a shallow mapping onto provincial Arabia.[19] The effect was to confer a patriarchal status on the Nabatean cultic centres of Petra and Elusa. We do not know how late these pagan traditions survived in the area. But we have already noted the characteristic Ḥanīfist transvaluation of pagan practice which would have applied here, and it was long ago pointed out that there are some curious links between the pagan cults of provincial Arabia and the Meccan cult as we know it from the Islamic tradition.[20]

In the second place, other renderings provided a deeper mapping in which the terminus was not Elusa but Ḥagra,[21] the Arabic al-Ḥijr.[22] The most interesting point here is the mention of Ḥagra in connection with the death of Ishmael in Gen. 25:18. Al-Ḥijr was thus an obvious place for a grave of Ishmael. That the Hagarenes did in fact make this use of it is suggested by a curious feature of Meccan topography: even in Mecca, Ishmael is buried in the *ḥijr*. In other words, we seem to have here a striking parallel to the case of Bakka. In each case the Hagarenes appear to have set out to find themselves a sanctuary from Gen. 25:18, in one case via the Samaritan Pentateuch, in the other via the Jewish Targum; and in each case they seem to have abandoned the site, taking the place-names with them to their final Meccan repository.[23]

The targumic renderings thus presented the north-west as appropriate terrain for a Hagarene sanctuary; and the connections of Mecca with al-Ḥijr and the paganism of provincial Arabia suggest that this potentiality may in fact have been exploited. Such a hypothesis would go well with the prominence of the north-west in the rather meagre Arabian geography of the Koran,[24] and would make sense of some anomalous indications in the Islamic tradition that the sanctuary was at one stage located to the *north* of Medina.[25]

But the importance of the targumic north-west in the sacred geography of the Hagarenes is most dramatically confirmed by what we know of the early history of the *qibla*: it is towards somewhere in north-west Arabia that they appear to have turned in prayer. In the first place, we have the archaeological evidence of two Umayyad mosques in Iraq, that of Ḥajjāj in Wāsiṭ and another attributed to roughly the same period near Baghdad. These mosques are oriented too far north by 33 degrees and 30 degrees respectively;[26] and with this we may compare the literary testimony to the effect that the Iraqi *qibla* lay to the west.[27] Secondly, we have the

literary evidence relating to Egypt.[28] From the Islamic side there is the tradition that the mosque of 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ in Fusṭāṭ pointed too far north, and had to be corrected under the governorship of Qurra b. Sharīk.[29] From the Christian side we have the remarkable statement of Jacob of Edessa, a contemporary eye-witness, that the 'Mahgraye' in Egypt prayed facing *east* towards the Ka'ba.[30] The combination of the archaeological evidence from Iraq with the literary evidence from Egypt points unambiguously to a sanctuary in north-west Arabia, and with this it is hard to avoid the conclusion that the location of the Hagarene sanctuary in Mecca was secondary.

The other major source of perturbation in the sacred geography of Arabia was the search for a suitable scenario for the Mosaic activities of the Prophet. In the first instance this meant resiting the Hagarene exodus. Negatively, the Prophet was disengaged from the original Palestinian venture by a chronological revision whereby he died two years before the invasion began.[31] Positively, a less embarrassing destination for the exodus was sought in the non-Palestinian conquests: the Islamic tradition preserves traces of a transfer of the notion of the promised land to the invasion of Iraq,[32] and of a generalisation of the exodus to the conquered territories as a whole.[33] But the definitive solution was to detach the exodus from the conquests altogether and relocate it within Arabia. Thus in the Koran the 'day of redemption' (8:42) has become an episode in the biography of the Prophet, identified in the Islamic tradition with the battle of Badr. Conversely the in-gathering of the Jewish exiles to Palestine at the hands of the Redeemer became their expulsion from Arabia at the hands of a Muslim caliph,[34] and the Jewish collaborators of the Palestinian venture became the Arab (but not Ishmaelite) Anṣār of Medina.[35] The transposed exodus was then sealed into its new Arabian setting with the tradition 'There is no *hijra* after the conquest of Mecca'.[36]

Transposing an exodus is complicated because it necessarily involves more than one place. The Islamic tradition operates with two basic categories: the exodus takes the Prophet to the 'province', the *madīna*,[37] whence he prepares the recovery of the 'metropolis', the *umm al-qurā*. Now it makes good historical sense to suppose that the Prophet initiated the invasion of Palestine from some Arabian base.[38] This base could conceivably have been Yathrib,[39] although the association of Medina with Midian in some sources[40] and general geographical plausibility might suggest a location farther north. The crucial category is however the metropolis, originally Palestinian, but already in the Koran manifestly Arabian.[41] The problem of setting up such a metropolis could be approached in either of two ways.

The most obvious solution was simply to up-grade the base to metro-

politan status: Muḥammad's 'province' was now reinterpreted as his 'city'. That this solution was in part adopted is suggested by the curiously metropolitan character which Medina displays in certain respects: it is itself a sanctuary,[42] it is in effect the final destination of the Hagarene exodus,[43] and unambiguously the political metropolis of early Islamic history.[44] The alternative was to pivot the exodus on the provincial status of the base: Medina was, so to speak, held constant, while the sacred conquest shifted from Jerusalem to Mecca. Despite the metropolitan features of Medina, this is the solution to which the Islamic tradition substantially inclines.

At this point we need to recall an important feature of the doctrinal background: the advance from the religion of Abraham to that of Muḥammad. The Abrahamic sanctuary was clearly intended as the Hagarene metropolis; but for an Islam conceived as the religion of Muḥammad, a Muḥammadan sanctuary might seem a more appropriate centre. What in fact emerged was a compromise in which Mecca retained the upper hand: 'Mecca was Abraham's sanctuary and Medina is my sanctuary,' as the Prophet says,[45] but Mecca remained the cultic centre of Islam. This Meccan resilience is surprising: one might have expected the Abrahamic sanctuary to be absorbed or left to decay along with the rest of the Abrahamic cult. The explanation we would suggest is that the primacy of Mecca was saved by the superimposition on the Abrahamic sanctuary of another extraneous Mosaic role. When redemption became scripture, the Hagarenes found themeselves in need of an Arabian Sinai. They had to find it moreover in a part of Arabia less contaminated by Judaism than Medina, the scene of the transposed and retrojected Hagarene break with the Jews.

It does in fact make some sense to analyse the Meccan complex as an Abrahamic sanctuary skewed by Mosaic revelation. In the Islamic tradition, the Meccan Sinai on which the Prophet receives his first revelation is of course Ḥirā'.[46] But 'Arafāt, the mountain belonging to the Abrahamic complex, also bears traces of Sinaitic contamination. In the first place, while the form of the *ḥajj* suggests the Samaritan pilgrimage to Mt Gerizim, its ritual content presents striking parallels to the Biblical account of the waiting of the Israelites by Mt Sinai.[47] It is as though the ritual were reenacting a waiting of the Ishmaelites while their own prophet went up their own mountain. Secondly, the Meccan complex differs in one major respect from that of Shechem: the 'house of God' has been moved from the mountain into the town[48] – though the actual ritual of sacrifice has, rather inconsistently, been left behind.[49] It would do something to explain this denudation of the mountain if the model had at some stage been Sinai rather than Gerizim.

In any case, Mecca was adopted as the scene of Muḥammad's early

revelations; and with this we have the essentials of the curious pattern of Hijāzī sacred geography, in which the Mosaic roles of the Prophet are distributed between the distinct sanctuaries of Abraham and Muḥammad.

The other major Samaritan calque was a rationale for political authority among the Hagarenes. Judaic messianism, quite apart from being Judaic, was inherently a religious legitimation of a climactic event, not of an on-going authority. Equally the Christian empire which the Hagarenes displaced was a mere adjunction of two distinct conceptual orders which provided no intrinsically religious rationale for imperial rule.[50] What neither the Christians nor the Jews could contrive was an intrinsically religious legitimation of an on-going authority. And this, oddly enough, was precisely what the Samaritans could offer: the central political value of Samaritanism is the continuing legitimacy of the Aaronid high-priesthood.[51] The eternal priesthood thus made it possible for the Hagarenes to abandon the millennium without collapsing into kingship.[52]

That the Islamic imamate[53] is a Samaritan calque is suggested by the structural resemblance of the two institutions. In each case we have an office in which supreme political and religious authority are fused, and in each case the primary qualification for office is the combination of religious knowledge with a sacred genealogy.[54] The analogy is obvious enough, and was perceived long ago: the Samaritans themselves in their Arabic writings adopted the imamate to translate their own high-priesthood.[55]

It is however in the case of the 'Alid imamate that the parallelism is most striking. In the first place, in Shī'ism as in Samaritanism, the religious knowledge takes on a marked esoteric flavour.[56] Secondly, the genealogical qualification sharpens into descent from a particular collateral of the Prophet, Aaron in the Samaritan case and 'Alī in the Islamic;[57] and the parallelism becomes explicit in the Shī'ite traditions which support the claims of 'Alī to the imamate by asserting and developing the proposition that 'Alī is to Muḥammad as Aaron to Moses.[58] Thirdly, it is in some remarks on the Shī'ism of the second civil war in what appears to be a near-contemporary Arabic text that the clearest characterisation of priestly authority in Islam is to be found, accompanied by the striking designation of the priests as *kāhins*.[59] Finally, it is just possible that in the Koranic account of the golden calf we have an allegorical condemnation of the Samaritan role in the making of the 'Alid high-priesthood.[60]

As in the case of the Meccan sanctuary, the case for a Samaritan model is basically a rather simple one. But here again, this case needs to be qualified by an attempt to sketch in the evolution which the concepts underwent in Hagarism before achieving their definitive Islamic form. The

source of the perturbations in this case seems to have been a secondary resurgence of Judaic influence.

The notion of a high-priestly authority was not of course alien to rabbinic Judaism. But the actual character of religious authority as it existed in this milieu was clearly antithetical to the smooth functioning of such an institution. In the long run this does much to account for the differentiation of orthodox Islam from Shī'ism: with the dispersal of religious authority among a disorganised learned laity,[61] it is hardly surprising that the genealogical qualification should have been relaxed and that imamic learning should have lost its esoteric edge. In the short run, the rabbinical background helps to explain the emergence in the strongly Judaic milieu of Iraq of a movement which stripped the imamate of its priestly character. Khārijism did of course in general accept the imamate – what concrete alternative did Judaism have to offer? But the knowledge of the imam was denuded of any esoteric quality, and the very notion of a sacred genealogy was rejected.[62] It is appropriately to the Khārijites who seceded from 'Alī in the first civil war that the Islamic tradition attributes the slogan 'there is no judgment but God's': despite the characteristically Samaritan form of the jingle, its content looks passably like a denial of one of the basic high-priestly prerogatives.[63]

The most important Judaic contribution was, however, the reassertion of the original messianic drive of Judeo-Hagarism in a new conceptual setting. It was again in Iraq that the messiah returned as the mahdi.[64] Doctrinally, the transformation undergone by the repressed messiah was considerable, and indeed it seems most likely that the model for the mahdi was originally not the messiah but Moses redivivus.[65] But whatever the doctrinal disparity, it is clear enough that the mahdi had inherited the role of political redeemer which lies at the heart of Judaic messianism.

It thus makes sense in genetic terms to identify two quite distinct Hagarene attempts to define the meaning of their politics: the continuing legitimacy of a Samaritan high-priesthood as against the imminent consummation of a neo-Judaic mahdism. It also makes a fair amount of sense in terms of the Islamic sources to insist on the distinct and even antithetical character of the two notions into at least the middle of the eighth century. On the one hand we have the imamate handed down in the priestly 'Alid lineages of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, the Eliezer and Ithamar of the Samaritan schema, and the freedom of these lineages from mahdic contamination until the period after the 'Abbāsid revolution. And on the other hand we have the outer lineages of the holy family, pretenders who have no status within the Samaritan schema and whose primary roles are mahdic.[66]

Yet at some stage, perhaps in the half century after the 'Abbāsid revolution, the two antithetical notions interacted. What concerns us about

this rapprochement is not its politics but its central conceptual mechanism. It is a prominent feature of the doctrine attributed by the Islamic sources to Ibn Saba' that 'Alī is identified as the heir of Muḥammad in explicit analogy with Joshua in respect of Moses.[67] This use of the Mosaic schema has two interesting implications. In the first place, Joshua was not just the successor of Moses, but his *only* successor. To identify 'Alī, not as the first of a line of high priests, but as the sole successor of the Prophet, was to clear the future for the coming of the mahdi. Secondly, to cast 'Alī as Joshua is properly to make of him a layman unrelated to the Prophet, as opposed to a priestly brother.[68]

The archaic purity of this doctrine is apparent in the way it turns on the fact that 'Alī cannot be Aaron and Joshua at once. But the coexistence of rival castings of 'Alī was likely to issue in conflation, and the key to the Islamic notion of the imamate is precisely the fusion of the two Mosaic figures. The Joshuan successor and the Aaronic brother have come together in the compromise which makes 'Alī the cousin of the Prophet.[69] More generally, the eternal priesthood and the sole successorship have merged into a line of more or less priestly successors, with the characteristic Shī'ite identification of the last of the line as the mahdi. The qualifications for office – religious knowledge, more or less esoteric, and a sacred genealogy, more or less narrowly defined – combine with the dynastic pattern to perpetuate the Samaritan high-priesthood. But the identification of the institution as a successorship to the Prophet constitutes the residue of the mahdic manipulation of the figure of Joshua. The fusion was nicely expressed in a reinterpretation of the idea of the caliphate:[70] the vicar of God (*khalīfat allāh*) became the Prophet's successor (*khalīfat rasūl allāh*),[71] and the first such successor was neatly accommodated in the two-year gap created by the retrojection of the Prophet's death to 632.[72]

5
BABYLONIA

With the elevation of Muḥammad to the role of a scriptural prophet and the assimilation of the Samaritan borrowings, Hagarism had given way to something recognisably Islamic. The transition can plausibly be placed in the late seventh century, and more particularly in the reign of 'Abd al-Malik. On the one hand, the numismatic, documentary and architectural remains of this period manifest a new and assured religious persona.[1] And on the other, the period is marked in the Islamic tradition by the destruction and rebuilding of sanctuaries,[2] political conflicts revolving around mahdic and imamic themes, and the attempt to impose a standard Koranic text – memories which find some confirmation outside the tradition,[3] and are strongly suggestive of a period of drastic religious change. Further, it is to the reign of 'Abd al-Malik that recent research has traced the origins of Islamic theology.[4] There is thus reason to assume that the outlines of Islam as we know it had already appeared by the beginning of the eighth century.

There is, however, no reason to include in these outlines the rabbinical culture which is so pronounced a feature of classical Islam.[5] In the first place, such a development is *a priori* unlikely. 'Abd al-Malik's Islam had emerged under Syrian aegis, and there was little in the Syrian environment to force upon the Hagarenes the combination of a holy law with a learned laity. The initial Hagarene involvement with Judaism had been too brief in duration and too messianic in content to leave much scholastic residue. Equally the slow percolation of cultural influence from the overwhelmingly Christian environment was unlikely to push the Hagarenes in this direction. Above all Samaritanism, the major influence on the structure of Hagarism in its formative period, provided a model which was substantially the antithesis of the rabbinical pattern. In terms of the social embodiment of religious authority, Samaritanism is characterised by the esoteric learning of a hereditary priestly elite; and in terms of the intellectual content of this learning, Samaritanism, for all its Mosaic emphasis, does not appear to have been a halakhic faith to anything like the same extent as Judaism.[6]

In the second place, such scant evidence as we have regarding the relevant aspects of Hagarism[7] tends to confirm these inferences in two

ways. First, there are indications from the Islamic side of the relative insignificance of the category of religious law in Hagarism. Islamic law preserves memories of Umayyad legal *practice*, but hardly of anything that could be styled Umayyad *law*;[8] and equally, the scripture which Hagarism bequeathed to classical Islam was one distinctly low in halakhic content.[9] Secondly, it is worth noting that in so far as there are indications of legal awareness, they point to a holy law based squarely if naively on scripture.[10]

There can in fact be little doubt that Islam acquired its classical rabbinic form in the shadow of Babylonian Judaism, probably in the aftermath of the transfer of power from Syria to Iraq in the middle of the eighth century. The Judaic model is established by the fact that no other faith offered the same combination of holy law and learned laity, and this general structural resemblance is reinforced by the evidence of specific borrowings, most obviously the method and term *qiyās*.[11] The Babylonian environment is scarcely more open to doubt: Babylonia was in this period the unrivalled centre of rabbinic Judaism, and it is equally to this region that research from the Islamic side has traced the origins of Islamic law.[12]

The attitude of the early Iraqi schools towards the sources of law is correspondingly close to that of the rabbis. In particular, there is the same rather unthinking acceptance of an oral tradition perfunctorily placed under the general aegis of the relevant prophet. In the eyes of the rabbis their oral tradition as a whole went back to Moses, as in the maxim that 'All Torah[13] is Mosaic halakha from Sinai.'[14] Likewise the early Iraqi lawyers use the notion of '*sunna* of the Prophet' to invoke a similarly general sanction for the living tradition of their school.[15] At the same time the role of scripture in early Islamic law appears to have been minimal,[16] which may reflect a combination of a simplistic mishnaic model with the belated appearance of the Koran.[17] One is tempted to say that the halakha of Iraq is as innocent of scripture as the scripture of Syria is innocent of halakha.

This innocence was rudely terminated by the interconfessional rumpus on the status of oral tradition which broke out in the second half of the eighth century. This controversy was an event of major significance in both the Jewish and Muslim communities, and it even seems to have infected the most important Christian community of Babylonia, the Nestorians.[18] In both Judaism and Islam, the established way of thinking was challenged by an outright rejection of oral tradition in favour of a uniquely scriptural foundation for the sacred law. On the Judaic side, this rejection took the form of Karaism. On the Muslim side, it appears as an early doctrine of the Mu'tazila.[19]

If the issue was the same in both communities, the resources available to the opposing groups were significantly different. In the Judaic case, the rabbis were already in the habit of attributing their tradition to Moses

and could cite a chain of authorities to establish the authenticity of the transmission;[20] this chain was duly refurbished to meet the Karaite challenge.[21] But the rabbis were in no position to proceed in this fashion in respect of each individual item of the tradition. The history of its transmission between Moses and the rabbis had been preempted by categories which were too clumsily unitary to admit of such differentiation. Hence the talmudic dimension of rabbinic scholarship, the attempt of the *gemara* to establish that the individual items were not only mutually compatible but also scripturally sanctioned[22]. And because the rabbis were in possession of a large and varied scriptural corpus with a good measure of halakhic content, the opportunities for such demonstration were quite rich.

Now it can be argued that *any* fundamentalist rejection of tradition needs more in the way of stuffing than is to be found among the fossilised meanings of scripture. To that extent the difference between the Judaic and Islamic rejections is simply that where the former finds its stuffing in Qumranic messianism,[23] the latter finds it in Greek rationalism.[24] But not all scriptures are equally amenable to the purposes of fundamentalists, and in this case the differing endowment of the two groups was arguably crucial. Just because the rabbis had the scriptural resources for their *gemara*, their Karaite opponents could hope to make a viable legal position of what one might call their reduction of mishna to midrash. The Hebrew scriptures, heavily exploited by analogy, thus sufficed to keep Karaism in business as a halakhic faith.[25] The Mu'tazila were less fortunate: their scripture was shorter, less varied, thinner in halakhic content, and the resulting strain is manifest in two ways. On the one hand, Mu'tazilite law is all root and no branch:[26] they attempt to eke out the scriptural foundations of law with reason, and end up with reason instead of law. And on the other hand, the outright rejection of the oral tradition itself disappears from the doctrines of the school.[27] Islamic law was always happy to place itself under a general Koranic aegis; but the reduction of mishna to midrash item by item is just not a feasible operation in Islam.

The Muslim rabbis, by contrast, were far better placed than their Jewish equivalents to respond to the fundamentalist challenge. The history of the transmission of the oral tradition between the Prophet and the eighth-century scholars was still gratifyingly plastic. It was therefore possible to defend the oral tradition item by item, tracing back each individual element to the Prophet with some suitable chain of authorities (*isnād*). Where the fundamentalists have failed to reduce Muslim mishna to midrash, the traditionists were able to glorify it by the multiplication of *isnāds*: the criticism of *isnāds* is the Muslim *gemara*.[28]

The triumph of Shāfi'ī's solution to the problem of the oral tradition can thus be seen as an apt response to the logic of the situation. But it was

more than that. Both the naive acceptance of the oral tradition among the early Iraqi lawyers, and its outright rejection among the Mu'tazila, display the old Hagarene dependence on non-Muslim, in this case Judaic, models.[29] Now Shāfi'ī's solution, like so much else, makes its first appearance in Babylonia;[30] and it can be related in a peripheral fashion to earlier rabbinic notions.[31] Yet the fact remains that it is without substantial Judaic antecedents. The Hagarenes had achieved a new, independent and effective solution to a central dilemma of learned monotheism; and with this their undignified clientage to the peoples they had conquered was finally at an end.

But the evolution whereby Islam attained this academic distinction was also the final negation of its redemptive origins. When in the course of the original messianic venture the Hagarenes left Arabia, they did so in order to go home, to establish themselves in a promised land that was theirs to enjoy by a divinely conferred right of inheritance. Judaic redemption had subsequently given way to the Samaritan calques: the high priest took the place of the messiah, the Abrahamic sanctuary that of Jerusalem. It was a transposition into a lower key, a shift from momentary frenzy to institutional permanence, but it was not in itself an unhappy one. Samaritanism is not an exilic faith, and the link between its sanctuary and its priesthood, however forced in scriptural terms,[32] is ancient and intimate. In Islam, however, this link was broken. The exigencies of politics required a Hagarene metropolis in the conquered territories, those of religion demanded its location in the depths of Arabia. Mu'āwiya may have worn no crown, but he did not wish to return to the seat of Muḥammad.[33] There does at one stage seem to have been a certain concern to restore the link. Whatever credit one ascribes to the traditions regarding 'Abd al-Malik's attempt to divert the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, the Dome of the Rock is an architecturally metropolitan building.[34] And against this suggestion of a pragmatic Umayyad attempt to bring the sanctuary to the high-priesthood can be set Ibn al-Zubayr's utopian determination to take the high-priesthood to the sanctuary. But thereafter the break was definitive.

The result was the introduction of an exilic quality into the relationship between political authority and sacred geography in Hagarism. And when the 'Abbāsid revolution issued in the transfer of the high-priesthood from Syria to Babylonia, the stage was set for its eventual degeneration into a mere exilarchate,[35] the shadow of a shadow, finally to disappear at the hands of the Mongols in the company of its Judaic equivalent. Even among the Imāmīs, the politically inert high priests were carted off from their 'Alid metropolis into Babylonish captivity, and the captivity in due course compounded by a concealment that was virtually transcendental.

For those Shī'ites who persisted in regarding the reality of a high-priesthood as a central religious value, there remained of course the alternative of compounding Babylonish captivity with an exodus to the doubly exilic mountain-tops of the Caspian or the Yemen. But in Babylonia itself the key value of religious politics was a dispirited perpetuation of the quietism of the rabbis in the face of an alien or desanctified state.[36] The long and intricate religious evolution of the Hagarenes was thus not without a certain ironic circularity. Their religious odyssey began and ended with Judaism, and in the process the Samaritan sanctuary in Arabia and the Samaritan high-priesthood in Syria had cancelled out. But there was also tragic development in the apparent circularity. The redemptive Judaism of Palestine had given way to the academic Judaism of Babylonia, good tidings to Zion to prayers for the peace of Babylon. The Hagarenes had abandoned the messiah only to end up with an exilarch, they had rejected the Jewish *miqdash* only to end up in the same *medinah*.[37]

There was of course a crucial difference: the Hagarenes were their own jailors, and their exile was to that extent a better appointed one.[38] They still had honour, love, obedience, troops of friends. Their sanctuary, though on occasion burnt, was not destroyed in the manner of the Jewish Temple: they never actually became *mourners* of Mecca. And for all their quietism, they retained a residual zealotism which even among the Imāmīs could in due course be activated by the menace of infidel rule.[39] But if the comforts of self-imposed exile were substantial, its costs went very deep. The Jews went into exile having lost everything to the overwhelming malevolence of an infidel power; if it was a punishment for their sins, God had at least sent the *Babylonians* to punish them.[40] The very totality of the deprivation in the present, and its essentially exogenous character, meant that the Jews had catharsis and hope. But the Mongols came too late to perform such a service for the emotional economy of Islam.

Without catharsis, the past was blighted. Few peoples can claim a more startlingly successful history than the Arabs in the period from the conquests to the fall of the Umayyads; and yet the classical sources breathe an air of utter disillusion. The Umayyads were branded as kings, their policy as tyranny, their taxation as extortion,[41] their conquests as *tajmīr*,[42] and their beliefs as impiety; only the losing parties in the civil wars of the period stood any chance of retrospective sanctification.[43] But the blight reaches back even into the inner-Arabian history of the patriarchal caliphate, and eats away the moral standing of such heroes of the conquests as 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ and Khālid b. al-Walīd. And without catharsis, there was equally no hope: the withering of the past meant the withering of the future. When the Jews went into exile, they took with them the memory of a sacred past the future restoration of which became a central religious

value. But the Hagarenes, because it was their own conquests that had taken them into exile, and because they had no oppressors but themselves, had no relevant past to restore: all the glory of Kedar had failed. Where the messiah comes to reinstate the political reality of the Davidic monarchy, the mahdi merely fills the world with a historically colourless justice.[44] Where the in-gathering of the Israelite exiles is a central theme of the messianic programme, the eschatological in-gathering of the Ishmaelites is a purely Christian fantasy.[45] The mourners of Zion may one day have beauty for ashes; but Ishmael has no redeemer, they enjoyed him in the days of 'Umar the Fārūq. The whirlwinds in the south abated to leave Islam, like Judaism, as a religion dominated by the legalism of Babylonian rabbis: but whereas in Judaism the other side of the coin is messianic hope, in Islam it is Ṣūfī resignation.

APPENDIX I: THE KENITE; REASON AND CUSTOM

The Kenite

Three passages in the 'Secrets' (see above, p. 4) make reference to Num. 24:21. This verse forms part of Balaam's classic messianic prophecy, and runs: 'And he looked upon the Kenite, and took up his parable, and said, Strong is thy dwelling-place, and thy nest is set in the rock' (the pun on *qen* = 'nest' and *qeni* = 'Kenite' is lost in translation). Numbering the lines in Jellinek's text, the passages in the 'Secrets' are the following:

(1) 'And he [in the context, Rabbi Simon] began to sit and expound "And he looked upon the Kenite"' (lines 4f; the Geniza fragment (see Lewis, 'Apocalyptic Vision', p. 309n) adds the next three words of the verse).

(2) 'Again, "And he looked upon the Kenite": and what parable did the wicked one [Balaam] take up, except that when he saw the sons of his [the Kenite's] sons who were to arise and subject Israel, he began to rejoice, and said, "Strong is thy dwellingplace"? I see that the sons of man do not eat save according to the commandments of Ethan the Ezrahite' (lines 21–5; for the reference to Ethan, see below, p. 163, n.22).

(3) 'And he [in the context, the second Ishmaelite king] builds a mosque (*hishtaḥawayah*) there on the Temple rock, as it is said, "thy nest is set in the rock" (line 28).

Who is the Kenite? In the 'Prayer of Rabbi Simon ben Yoḥay', an apocalypse of the time of the Crusades in which a version of the 'Secrets' is embedded, the answer is in principle clear enough: the Kenite represents an oppressive kingdom immediately preceding that of Ishmael (Lewis, 'Apocalyptic Vision', pp. 312f). Whether we should think in terms of Rome (see Lewis's commentary, *ibid.*, p. 321) or Persia (cf. the Kenite siege of Jerusalem, *ibid.*, p. 312) does not greatly matter for us. But can we read the same answer back into the 'Secrets', the source from which the figure of the Kenite in the 'Prayer' is manifestly taken? Two arguments indicate that we cannot, and that instead we have to identify the Kenite with the Arabs themselves. In the first place, there is the internal evidence. Negatively, there is no ground for taking the Kenite to *precede* the Arabs, since he is mentioned both before and after the kingdom of Ishmael appears; and specifically, there is no reason to take him to represent Rome, which is already cast as Edom (lines 2 and 6). Positively, there is good reason to identify the Kenite with the Arabs, since Num. 24:21 is cited in connection with their building activities on the Temple Mount. Secondly, there is the external evidence. There already existed a well-established tradition regarding the identity of the Kenite. The standard rendering is 'Shalmians' (see for example Onqelos, pseudo-Jonathan and Neophyti to Gen. 15:19,

and Onqelos, Fragmentary Targum and Neophyti to Num, 24:21), an Arabian tribe closely associated with the Nabateans (see particularly Stephanus of Byzantium, *Ethnika, s.n.* 'Salamioi'). Other renderings include 'Nabateans' (Babylonian Talmud, *Baba Batra*, f. 56a, but the text is corrupt), 'Arabs' (Jerusalem Talmud, *Shebi'it*, f. 35b), and 'Jethro the proselyte' (pseudo-Jonathan to Num. 24:21). Against this background, an identification with Rome or Persia is as out of place as one with the Arabs is apt.

If the Kenite of the 'Secrets' represents the Arabs, what was the point of the identification? The exposition of Num. 24:21 advanced in the first sentence of the second passage is highly unfavourable to the Kenite. But a number of features of this exposition call for suspicion. First, the exposition was promised in the first passage, but only turns up 16 lines later. Second, the interpretation of Balaam's complimentary remarks to the Kenite as the expression of his personal anti-Israelite sentiment is quite improper: Balaam is a prophet who can speak only the words which God puts into his mouth. Thirdly, this contrived interpretation goes against the whole background of rabbinic exegesis of the verse, as will shortly be seen. There are thus strong grounds for suspecting the anti-Arab interpretation of Num. 24:21 in the text as we now have it to be a secondary interpolation, a revision comparable in motive to the neutralisation of the messianic interpretation of Is. 21:7 by Dan. 11:39 and Ez. 4:13. In which case, can we infer from the rabbinic background what the message of the censored exposition might have been?

In the first place, it is in relation to Jethro that the rabbis adduce Num.24:21 (Babylonian Talmud, *Sanhedrin*, f. 106a; *Exodus Rabbah*, 27: 3, 6; compare the targumic rendering of 'the Kenite' as 'Jethro the proselyte' cited above). Jethro is of course the father-in-law of Moses and the model proselyte (B. J. Bamberger, *Proselytism in the Talmudic Period*[2], New York 1968, pp. 182–91). It is thus unsurprising that the rabbis should take the verse as a divine pronouncement in Jethro's favour, and there is a strong presumption that the original exposition in the 'Secrets' would have done likewise. Secondly, the primary source of this benevolent attitude towards the Kenites is their participation in the events of the first redemption. Thus rabbinic discussions of the source of the privileged position of the Kenite (and at the same time Rechabite) scribes of I Chr. 2:55 regularly cite Judges 1:16, according to which the Kenites 'went up out of the city of palm trees with the children of Judah into the wilderness of Judah . . . and dwelt among the people' (Babylonian Talmud, *Sanhedrin*, ff. 104a, 106a; cf. *Sifre* on Num. 10:29). It is thus very plausible that the original exposition of the 'Secrets' should have alluded to this participation. Thirdly, the messianic potential of this material is obvious: simple application of the principle of the parallelism of the Mosaic and messianic redemptions (see below, p. 158, n.46) yields a neat Judaic rationale for an Arab role in a Jewish messianic venture; and it is again plausible that the censored exposition should have contained a rationale of this kind. There is moreover one late midrashic source which provides a suggestive parallel. Makhiri includes in his materials to Is. 52:7 some observations on the role of the Rechabites in the messianic age: it is they who will bring the good tidings to Jerusalem, and what is more they will enter the Temple and sacrifice there (J. Spira (ed.), *Yalquṭ ha-Makhiri 'al Yesha'yahu*, Berlin 1894, p. 195). The Rechabites, as explicitly stated

in I Chr. 2:55, are Kenites (a circumstance not without interest in the context of the wine tabu), and are thus, in the view of the rabbis, descendants of Jethro (see for example *Mekhilta de-Rabbi Ishma'el*, 'Amaleq, 4 to Ex. 18:27).

Is the figure of the Kenite the residue of what was once an independent apocalypse? Three points suggest that it is. First, it would hardly be legitimate for the Arabs to appear as both Kenites and Ishmaelites within a single apocalyptic interpretation. Secondly, the Kenite passages are poorly integrated with the rest of the apocalypse: the first passage in particular is strikingly out of place (preparing to embark on an exegesis of Num. 24:21 is scarcely an appropriate reaction to an eschatological vision in which in any case the Kenite plays no part, and in fact we return to the vision immediately). Thirdly, there is a difference of language. As shown below (p. 153, n. 13), the interpretation of Is. 21:7 makes sense only if the passage was originally cited from the Targum, whereas in both the second and third Kenite passages, the original Hebrew is required (for the pun on *etan* in the second passage, see below, p. 163, n. 22; the third passage turns on taking 'the rock' as a reference to the Temple rock, a connection which is rather lost if one substitutes the targumic renderings 'the cleft of the rock' (Neophyti),' 'the clefts of the rocks' (pseudo-Jonathan), 'a cleft' (Fragmentary Targum), 'a fortress' (Onqelos)). There is thus reason to think that the 'Secrets' preserves the residue of *two* originally independent messianic interpretations of the Arab conquest.

Reason and Custom

If our analysis of the relationship of Islamic to Judaic jurisprudential categories is right, it needs extension to two less obviously Jewish notions. First, early Islamic law is marked by the prominence of the term *ra'y* in the senses of 'opinion' (of an individual) or 'reasoning' (in general) (Schacht, *Origins*, pp. 79, 98ff, and cf. van Ess, 'Untersuchungen', p. 27; synonyms include *fiqh*, *Encyclopaedia of Islam*², *s.v.*). The corresponding Judaic terms are *da'at* (usually but not always individual) and *sevara* (general, but often accompanied by the verb *savar* introducing individual views) (see Bacher, *Exegetische Terminologie*, *s.vv.*). The Judaic usage, like the *early* Islamic, is not pejorative. Secondly, early Islamic law has a high regard for the authority of custom or practice: *'amal* or *sunna* (Schacht, *Origins*, pp. 58ff, and cf. van Ess, 'Untersuchungen', p. 42), the latter not yet identified as that of the Prophet. The Judaic equivalents are *minhag* and *ma'ase* (*Encyclopaedia Judaica*, *s.vv.*). On both sides we find the idea that custom can abrogate law (compare the set phrase *minhag mevaṭṭel halakha* with Schacht, *Origins*, pp. 63 (where Ibn Qāsim lacks only the term *halakha le-ma'ase*), 80).

The impact of the eighth-century controversy on these categories is visible on both sides, but is predictably more drastic in the Islamic case. First, the Jewish reassertion of the authority of the oral tradition leads to the playing down of *sevara*: witness the claim of Yehudai Gaon (*c.* 760) that he had never answered a question if he did not have both proof from the Talmud and the practical endorsement of his teacher, who in turn had it from his teacher (Ginzberg, *Geniza Studies*, vol. ii, pp. 558f). On the Islamic side (the long-term emergence of a similar *taqlīd* apart) we have two countervailing shifts: *ra'y* is downgraded into a term of abuse (identified as *individual*, it is dismissed as *subjective*); and

fiqh is kicked upstairs to become a term for law in general. Secondly, *minhag* is likewise under pressure: it is again Yehudai Gaon who writes to the Land of Israel to urge the abandonment of practices adopted under Byzantine persecution in favour of a full observance of the law (the Palestinians, provincials in this story, obstinately replied that custom abrogates law) (*ibid.*, pp. 559f). The parallel development in Islam is the assault on the legal pretensions of practice: Shāfi'ī meets with the same obstinacy in the 'Land of Ishmael' as Yehudai in the Land of Israel (see particularly Schacht, *Origins*, p. 65). But again, the Islamic development is twofold: *'amal* is downgraded into mere practice and more or less dismissed, but *sunna* is elevated into that of the Prophet and becomes supreme.

Finally, we would like to return to the question of priority in the fundamentalist rejection of the oral tradition. Shāfi'ī disputing with those who reject all traditions for the Koran (*ibid.*, pp. 40f) and Ben Baboi fulminating against pigs who study the written but deny the oral Torah (Ginzberg, *Geniza Studies*, vol. ii, p. 571) are contemporaries whom we know at first hand; and we need have few qualms about tracing the rejection they condemn back to 'Anan b. David and Ḍirār b. 'Amr. But how much older is it? On the Jewish side, the question is how far the *She'iltot* of Aḥai of Shavḥa (d. 752) indicate Karaism as a movement to have been in the making in his lifetime. On the Islamic side, is one to read the position of Ḍirār into such fragmentary data as we have for the views of 'Amr b. 'Ubayd (d. 761)?

But there is also evidence of a naive fundamentalism (one without explicit rejection of oral tradition) at a very early stage in the evolution of Islam (below, p. 168, n. 20); the impression that this antedates the Koran itself is reinforced by the dispute over the penalty for adultery (below, p. 180, n. 17), by the implication of the term *ahl al-kitāb* that the early Muslims recognised only one book which was not their own, and even by some Koranic texts (above, p. 17, and below, p. 179, n. 10). Despite our ignorance of Samaritan jurisprudence in this period, it is worth speculating that this naive fundamentalism may have accompanied, or been suggested by, the Samaritan scriptural position (cf. Marqah's insistence that 'we do not believe [in anything] outside your [God's] Torah', Ben-Ḥayyim, *Literary and Oral Tradition*, p. 196). Now this fundamentalism appears to have a certain *Fortleben* in two texts which claim to date from the end of the seventh century, and are certainly early. They combine a striking innocence of *ḥadīth* with a great reliance on scripture (by now, of course, the Koran), and occasionally describe the Koran in a fundamentalist vein (see Schacht, 'Sur l'expression "*Sunna* du Prophète"', p. 363, for the epistle of 'Abdallāh b. Ibāḍ, and Ritter, 'Studien zur Geschichte der islamischen Frömmigkeit', p. 68, for that of Ḥasan al-Baṣrī). The possibility thus arises that the immediate background to the explicit rejection of the oral tradition in both Judaism and Islam was not Jewish but Islamic.

PART II

WHITHER ANTIQUITY?

6
THE IMPERIAL CIVILISATIONS

A polytheistic world-view is capable of eliciting a rich and subtle range of meanings from a many-faceted reality. It is however likely to do so at a price: what its meanings stand to gain in variety, they also stand to lose in power. In particular, polytheism is neither unitary enough to provide a really drastic articulation of the subjective solidarity of a people, nor sweeping enough to provide a really penetrating account of the objective nature of a universe. The problem is that there is no one replacement of polytheism in these two roles. The first is best performed by a personal God, the second by impersonal concepts – a polarity well caught in the contrast between Judaism and Buddhism. And while it is perfectly possible to mix or misuse the categories,[1] it is not possible to maximise on the potentialities of both at the same time. The choices made by the Iranians and the Greeks were less monolithic than those embodied in Judaism and Buddhism; but they were sufficiently different to provide the clue to the subsequent divergence of the histories of the two peoples.

The intellectual context in which Zoroastrianism took shape was one which the Iranians shared with the Greeks and the Indians: in roughly the same period, and with roughly the same intellectual resources,[2] the three peoples embarked on a shift away from a more or less disintegrating polytheistic heritage and towards a more unitary and conceptual cosmology. But the historical context of Zoroaster's career is in one crucial respect more reminiscent of Moses than of Parmenides or the Buddha: Zoroastrianism was formed in a milieu dominated by the ethnic confrontation of Iran and Turan. It is not therefore surprising that the genetic relationship between the Zoroastrian cosmos and that of the Greeks or the Indians is in the last resort less striking than the analogous relationship between the Zoroastrian God and that of the Hebrews. The Zoroastrians did indeed have a cosmology in a sense in which the Jews did not; but out of this cosmology they had synthesised a personal God whose confrontation with the forces of evil constituted the overriding meaning of the universe.[3] The Magi equally possessed a philosophy in a sense in which the rabbis did not: but it was a philosophy directed less towards the contemplative understanding of an impersonal cosmic process than towards active participation in a personal cosmic struggle.

This had two fundamental implications for the character of the Zoroastrian community. In the first place, Zoroastrianism designated Iran as a nation apart. Positively, Zoroastrianism is a sanctification of Aryan ethnicity: Ahura Mazdā is as much the 'God of the Aryans'[4] as Yahweh is the 'God of Israel'. Negatively, Zoroastrianism is not for export to Anērān.[5] In principle Zoroastrian dualism, like Judaic monotheism, could be seen as a truth for all mankind; in practice the lesson of Manichaeism, as of Christianity, is that to make the universal message universally available was not to export the religion but to create a new one.[6] Like Judaism, Zoroastrianism could tolerate a limited penumbra of gentile adherents: the collaborating aristocrats of subject peoples in the Iranian case correspond to the spiritual fellow-travellers of the Jewish case. But Zoroastrianism remained fundamentally a religious persuasion rooted in the land of its birth. Against the outside world, the Aryans were as much a chosen people as the Jews.

In the second place, the corollary of external ethnic distinctiveness was a commitment to internal social pervasiveness. The Zoroastrian worldview provided no sanction for a philosophical indifference towards the philomythical proclivities of the masses. Zoroaster had not *transcended* the traditional polytheism of the Iranians, he had taken it apart and reformed it; and both the masses and their gods had accordingly to take sides in the all-engulfing cosmic struggle. Some of the old gods, like Mithra, reappeared on the side of the angels; others, like Indra, were transvalued into demons. And the worship of demons could not in the Zoroastrian conception be less than cosmic and national treason. What was actually done about the demonic menace was of course a historically contingent matter; the Parthians in particular do not seem to have been much concerned by it. But an attempt to eradicate demon-worship is already attested in the Achaemenid inscriptions, and the theme is a favourite one in the Sasanid period.[7] There was thus no more room for the demons and their worshippers in Iran than there was for the baalim and their worshippers in Israel; internally, the Aryans were as much a nation of priests as the Jews. In sum, Zoroastrianism was built to be at once horizontally exclusive and vertically inclusive: the faith, in other words, of a nation.

But if the national roles of Ahura Mazdā and Yahweh are strikingly similar, their ecological roles are diametrically opposed. Yahweh was the God of the barbarian conquerors of a settled and civilised Canaan: in his name they came out of the desert, and in his name they withdrew to the ghetto when eventually the conquest was reversed. Ahura Mazdā by contrast was the God of a settled Canaanite society defending its way of life against nomadic invaders; he does not perhaps appear as a culturally

sophisticated deity in the manner of Enki, but he is in no wise a committed barbarian in the manner of Yahweh. The result was a felicity in the relationship of Zoroastrianism to the institutional heritage of its Canaanite milieu that is notably absent from Judaism.

In the first place, Zoroastrianism lived in easy symbiosis with the Magian priesthood; and the Magi could contribute to the realisation of the national potential of Zoroastrianism in two ways. With regard to the external demarcation of the chosen people, the religious status of priestly genealogy aptly reinforced that of ethnic genealogy: the Aryans, in Canon Rawlinson's adaption of Eudemus, are those who have the Magi for their priests.[8] And with regard to the internal consolidation of the community, the Magi provided the rudiments of an institution wherewith to render the doctrine socially effective: the Magian priesthood of Achaemenid times became the Zoroastrian church of Sasanid times.

In the second place, Zoroastrianism conferred an unambiguous religious meaning on Aryan kingship. In Iran as in Israel, an intrinsically religious sanction was available for the effective political leadership of the chosen people against its enemies. But in the Israelite case the rejection of the Canaanite heritage meant that this blessing went more easily to the early prophets and judges than to the belated national monarchs. In Iran, by contrast, the twinship of religion and kingship was historically aboriginal and doctrinally unproblematic; and the legitimation of the monarchic government of a settled society carried with it the legitimation of the aristocratic substructure that goes with it.[9] Already in the Achaemenid inscriptions Ahura Mazdā is the tutelary deity of an Aryan kingship, and all rebels against this authority are construed as representatives of the Lie.[10]

The Zorastrian tradition is thus the articulation of a fully integrated identity. Doctrinally the cosmic confrontation of good and evil reappears in the ethnic confrontation of Iran and Anērān; institutionally the religious role of the Magian priesthood is matched by the political role of Aryan kingship. The persistence of such a tradition in the face of Macedonian conquest is hardly surprising; even the partial resuscitation of the past at the hands of the Parthians goes far beyond anything achieved in the same period by the Egyptians or the Babylonians. The full-blooded revival of the tradition at the hands of the Sasanids was of course a less predictable outcome – they did not have to set about so single-minded a restoration of what they believed the Macedonians to have overthrown. But if the realisation was the gift of historical contingency, the potential was very much the gift of the tradition itself: the project which the Sasanids executed in Iran could not even have been conceived in Hellas.

If the Iranian case approaches the Judaic in its emphasis on the role of

a personal God, the Greek case approaches the Buddhist in its emphasis on the role of impersonal concepts. Like the Iranians, the Greeks had their human enemies: mythically the Trojans, historically the Persians. But the Trojans were too distant in time, and too assimilated to the common culture of a heroic elite, to qualify as a Turanian menace to the Achaean way of life; while the Persians were too late in time, and in effect too distant in space, to set the tone of the intellectual evolution of Hellenism.[11] This evolution was thus overwhelmingly an attempt to grapple not with human hostility but with cosmic nonsense. The Greeks developed a conceptual cosmology wherewith to put the universe and its gods in perspective, rather than a theist myth wherewith to involve themselves as participants in a cosmic drama.

The implications of Zoroastrian cosmology for the nature of the community which adhered to it are thus reversed in the Greek case. In the first place Greek concepts, for all their association with the Greek way of life, provided no viable basis for setting the Greeks apart as a chosen people.[12] Far from offering a plausible vehicle of ethnic identity, philosophical truths become the legitimate property of whoever is able and willing to accept them. Zoroastrianism was a doctrine which necessarily began in Iran and necessarily stayed there; the Greeks by contrast were happy to attribute the origins of their concepts to the Egyptians, and in due course proceeded to pass them on to the Romans. Greek philosophy did not actually become extinct in the land of its birth in the manner of Buddhism;[13] but it could not be used to demarcate a holy land set apart from the rest of the world.

In the second place this propensity for horizontal diffusion was matched by an incapacity for vertical integration: just as the universal truths of Zoroastrian dualism were not in practice for Anērān, so the universal truths of Greek philosophy were not in practice for the masses. It was not that Greek philosophers were as indifferent as Indian Buddhists towards the 'religion of men'. The Epicureans dismissed the beliefs of the masses as ignorant superstition, the Stoics legitimated them as symbols of a higher truth. But for one thing, if this was the spirit in which the philosophers approached popular religion, it hardly mattered which people they elected to approach: what Epicurus and Zeno did for the gods of the Greeks, Lucretius and Panaetius could do just as well for those of the Romans. And for another, when it came to taking the masses in hand, the Epicureans were in practice as ataractic as the Stoics were apathetic.[14] Greek philosophy was not a reformation of Greek religion,[15] and it had neither the will nor the way to make of the Greeks a nation of philosophers. In sum, where Zoroastrianism makes a nation, Hellenism makes a cosmopolitan cultural elite.

Just as Hellenism lacked the ideological potential of Zoroastrianism, so also it lacked its institutional embodiment. On the one hand, Hellenism had no Magi: Greek priests dispensed no national philosophy, and Greek philosophers were no substitute for a national priesthood. And on the other hand, the rather ambiguous relationship of Hellenism to politics provided no sanction for a national polity. Historically, Greek thought was intimately associated with the life of the city state. Its specific political focus was thus by Iranian standards too narrow: for all the aspirations of philosophers to kingship, the *Republic* is no more a charter for a national monarchy than the *Iliad.*[16] Conceptually, the elevated concern of philosophy with the cosmos implied a tendency to be above politics. Its general intellectual focus was thus by Iranian standards too broad: if philosophical contemplation is the highest good, it becomes a matter of taste whether one elects to philosophise in an Alexandrian library or an Athenian tub.

The result was that Hellenistic monarchy could not be a national polity. The Macedonian conquests did indeed rid Greek thought of its parochial political obsession: politically obsolete, the city state survived primarily as a cultural form. But once freed from the distractions of the polis, the philosophers returned to the abiding problems of the universe. The citizens of the polis became citizens, not of Hellas, but of the cosmos; and their communal bond gave way, not to ethnic solidarity, but to the brotherhood of man. Against this background, the Macedonian kings could pose as the avengers of Hellenism against the Persians and act as its protectors in distant lands; but these roles remained external to a tradition within which the Hellenistic monarchies possessed no authentic intrinsic status. There could be no Greek Achaemenids, and by the same token there could be no Greek Sasanids; the establishment of a kingdom of Hellas had to wait on the nineteenth-century Bavarians.

The Greek world was thus precluded from attaining political and religious integration out of its own resources. But at the same time the character of the tradition laid it open to the arrival of these blessings from abroad. In the first place, Hellenism had an abundance of adherents beyond its ethnic frontiers; the Greeks could thus be conquered by their own cultural tributaries, where the Iranians could suffer this fate only at the hands of their ideological enemies.[17] In the second place, Hellenism had few resources for the ideological control of its masses; the Greeks could thus be converted by the missionaries of a foreign religion, where the Zoroastrian hold on the people of Iran could be subverted only by conquest. The result was that Iran retained its monolithic construction until the Hagarene conquerors destroyed its polity and religion in one, whereas the Greeks owed such political and religious unity as was foisted upon them to a Roman emperor and a Jewish God.

This double intrusion did something to knit the Greek world together, but it left it a long way from becoming a western Iran. Politically, there was the ambiguous relationship between the Greeks and the Romans. In principle, the Romans might have complemented their reception of Greek culture by adopting Greek ethnicity; in practice, they had the will and the means to persist in being ethnically different, and having found themselves a Trojan descent in Homer they proceeded to cultivate Greek philosophy in Latin dress. In a sense the result was to give the Greeks political integration and the Romans cultural integration into a Graeco-Roman imperial civilisation. But at the same time this dual civilisation meant a dual tension. The Greeks, for all their possession of the title-deeds to the culture, could never quite lose their political provinciality; and the Romans, for all the felicity of their evolution from city state to empire, could never quite live down their cultural provinciality.

Religiously, there was the ambiguous relationship between the Graeco-Romans and the Jews. The ancient world had called in a personal God with experience as the tutelary deity of a small and somewhat ill-fated people. The ensuing relationship was problematic in two ways. In the first place, the point of the invitation was that Yahweh was a personal God; but placing a personal God in charge of a conceptual universe is likely to involve a good deal of discomfort on both sides. In the second place, Yahweh's ethnic past lay outside the civilisation which had now adopted him. The Christians did of course sacrifice their ethnicity to convert the Greeks, unlike the Romans who had retained theirs and conquered them. But for all his denationalisation, Yahweh had brought with him an elaborate scriptural record of a culturally distinctive national past.[18]

A Greek culture, a Roman polity and a Judaic faith thus combined to form a tripartite civilisation. Even in its Byzantine form, this tradition remained a historically shallow adjunction of elements of diverse origins, with all three components potentially in mutual tension. The unfortunate Italus, an eleventh-century monk and a pupil of Psellus, appeared as an uncouth Latin barbarian to Anna Comnena, as a dangerously heterodox philosopher to the church, and as a figure of fun in his 'Galilean dress' to the sages of antiquity in the underworld.[19] The Byzantines were the heirs of Hellenism, yet in deference to their faith they did not venture to call themselves Hellenes;[20] Virgil and Cicero meant nothing to them, yet in deference to their polity they called themselves Romans.[21] In practice, this did not matter much to the extent that Byzantium worked: when one is on top of the world, one can afford to be incoherent. But it had an important implication which less favourable circumstances might bring into action: what history had so loosely put together, it could just as easily take apart.

7
THE NEAR-EASTERN PROVINCES

Syria, Egypt and Iraq were all seats of very ancient cultural traditions. None of these traditions had of course survived intact through the millennium of foreign rule by the more upstart Achaemenids, Greeks, Romans, Parthians and Sasanids which preceded the Arab conquests. But equally the low level of cultural integration characteristic especially of the Graeco-Roman and Parthian empires had ensured that none of them had completely disappeared. In the third century after Christ they were still alive; but in the third century likewise the old cultural permissiveness was coming to an end. Had the Arabs chosen to stage their conquests at this point, they would still have found a local and an imperial culture coexisting side by side – as in fact they did in North Africa; conversely, had they postponed their conquests until the tenth century it is conceivable (though not very likely) that they would have found nothing but local literati faithfully reproducing the imperial culture – as in fact they did in Spain. But since they chose to invade Egypt and the Fertile Crescent in the seventh century, what they actually found were three highly distinctive provincial syntheses, elaborated under a Christian aegis in reaction to metropolitan pressure on cultural deviance.

That Hellenism and local cultures had been able to coexist more or less undisturbed until the third century was a result of the Hellenistic segregation of elite and masses, politically as citizens and subjects, culturally as Greeks and barbarians, cognitively as devotees of concepts and devotees of myth. Since the Greeks operated with either supreme truths of limited social diffusion or socially pervasive truths of limited cognitive value, the tension between conflicting norms and beliefs within the empire was defused: the Graeco-Roman elite was freed of the obligation to impose its own supreme truths on the masses, while on the other hand it had no reason to withhold them from barbarians who were willing to make a cultural conversion. If those who stayed away were not pursued and those who came were not turned away, the former could be left to abide in peace by their barbarian ways while the latter could be expected to renounce their barbarian ways completely. So throughout the period a steady number of barbarians were siphoned off by Hellenism; but inasmuch

as the Hellenes had no interest in letting native values slip through for the sake of gaining a soul, few of these cultural converts betray their provincial origins. Run politically as a confederation of city states under the loose supervision of the Roman emperor, intellectually as a confederation of philosophical schools under the loose supervision of the civic gods, the Roman Empire was thus like a vast net casting its thin threads over a motley variety of barbarians: the threads everywhere caught men to be polished by the same remarkably uniform culture, but the meshes were everywhere large enough to let the majority of the barbarians escape with their own unpolished languages, creeds and institutions.

The domain of religion was of course an exception to this general pattern of insulation between things Greek and barbarian. If in this one respect the barbarians were granted to have had insights denied to the Greeks, there was nothing to prevent a genuine syncretic interchange; and religious syncretism is of course one of the most striking features of Hellenistic civilisation. But the moral discontinuity between elite and masses nonetheless persisted: the Greeks saw concepts where the peasant saw *ma'at*, and the native priests, on whom fell the task of preserving the unity of truth, lacked both the will and the way to control the social and geographical variations of their doctrines.[1]

The developments which put an end to this situation from the third century onwards were twofold. In the first place, militarisation changed the administrative structure of the empire, depriving the mandarins of the Graeco-Roman world of their monopoly on both political power and cultural rectitude.[2]

Politically, the Greeks had of course lost out to the Romans with the Roman conquest; but an emperor masquerading as a first citizen could not be a figure wholly inimical to the city state, and it was only under the impact of the barbarian invasions that local government by city states gave way to direct imperial rule. The *princeps* now emerged from his disguise as *dominus*, and the exclusive circle of *curiales* gave way to the upstart bureaucratic *officiales*. With the systematic removal of the traditional aristocracy, the provincials got their chance to make lucrative careers as bureaucrats whether centrally or locally, or for that matter as emperors, and unsurprisingly, the provincials responded. The quondam barbarians thus acquired a share in the government of the empire, while the imperial government conversely acquired greater local ramifications. All became formally citizens in A.D. 211 and substantively subjects in the course of the following centuries. Politically there was neither citizen nor subject, but the emperor was all and over all.

Culturally, the inherent universality of Hellenistic civilisation had of course been demonstrated by its adoption on the part of the Romans. But

the city state had remained the concrete embodiment of the Greek way of life, and just as the Greeks could anachronistically define politics as a matter of Greek cities until the third century, so they could define culture as a matter of the Greek way of life until the demise of the city state made Greek thought patently available for all. Barbarians now took an education in grammar, rhetoric or law with a view to an administrative career in the manner of Eutropius,[3] or they studied Greek wisdom to acquire religious insights after the fashion of Porphyry;[4] and the mandarins having lost both power and way of life, the syncretic terms of trade began to change. Culturally, there was neither Greek nor barbarian, but education was all and for all.

In the second place, Christianity changed the cognitive structure of the empire, depriving the mandarins of their monopoly on truth. The Christian God inherited two key characteristics from his ethnic past which distinguished him from other divinities popular at the time. On the one hand his jealousy tolerated neither cognitive nor social limitations, and the Christian missionaries therefore preached substantively the same truth to elite and masses. It is true of course that the Christians acquired something of the Hellenic contempt for barbarians and *idiotai*; but they nonetheless remained fishers of men with no intention of letting the lesser fry slip through, and in a Christian context the dismissiveness of the Greeks became a patronising concern for the needs of simpler souls. On the other hand Yahweh's solidarity required some form of ethnic limitation, and having lost his tribes to become the God of the gentiles, he not unnaturally tended to adopt in their place the polity into which he had been launched.[5] The meeting of his jealousy with Greek philosophy thus issued in a conceptually articulated orthodoxy equally binding on devotees of hypostases and devotees of saints; while the meeting of his solidarity with the Roman Empire generated an ecclesiastical organisation through which this doctrinal orthodoxy could be rendered socially effective.[6] Cognitively there were neither philosophers nor *idiotai*, but Christ was all and in all.[7]

The evolution in Iran, though infinitely less well-known, was not dissimilar. The loose confederation of kingdoms which constituted the Parthian Empire gave way to the centralised monarchy of the Sasanids, while the cultural philhellenism and religious indifference of the Parthians came to an end with the Sasanid restoration of an integral Zoroastrianism. Ahura Mazdā being the God of the Aryans, the Sasanids evinced a comparable concern for orthodoxy within the frontiers of the Iranian empire; and being in possession of a centralised monarchy, they developed a comparable, if rudimentary, ecclesiastical organisation for its enforcement.

In both empires more integration meant more solidarity – the wars of Crassus and Orodes gave way to the crusades of Heraclius and Khusraw

II; and in both more integration meant more tension between the component parts – undisturbed provinciality gave way to conversion and Graeco-Roman ABC's in the west,[8] missionary *hērbad*s in the east.[9] Had all the provincials been genuine barbarians the tension would no doubt have been limited: for the Carians or the Celtiberians the choice of civilisation in its inevitably Greek or Roman form was hardly a difficult one. Equally the tribal rejection of civilisation by Blemmyes or Berbers was hardly a major problem. But for the provincials of the Near East Graeco-Roman culture was neither the inevitable nor indeed the most desirable form in which civilisation could present itself on earth; and if cultural permissiveness had enabled them to preserve their own identity, cultural imperiousness now forced them to assert it actively against the metropolitan culture, or to restate it within it. And it was exactly because Christianity was at the same time the supreme truth of the metropolitan culture and the one truth that this culture unambiguously owed to the barbarians that it gave them the chance to beat the Greeks at religion as the Greeks had beaten them at philosophy. The same ethnic Gods who could be credited with the moral unity of Byzantium and Iran, could also be debited with the religious dissension of Egypt, Syria and Iraq.

Before 525 B.C. the Egyptian identity was an extremely neat product of geography, ethnicity, language, polity and religion, all the various components defining precisely the same entity. Geography (or the Nile) was god-given and carried Egypt undivided right through the millennium as a Persian satrapy, Ptolemaic kingdom, Roman province and Christian diocese; while the remaining components were spared complete erosion in the Ptolemaic period thanks to two main circumstances.

In the first place Egypt, unlike either Syria or Babylon, had a Daylam in the client kingdom of Nubia, which combined the right measure of political intransigence and cultural dependence to step forth as the restorer of the Pharaonic monarchy once the Pharaohs had gone: the Thebaid seceded under Nubian kings from 206 to 186 B.C.,[10] a third Nubian king may have provoked the Theban revolt in 165f,[11] and at all events Thebes continued to vent Amon's traditional dislike of the kings in the north until 88 B.C..[12] Faced with the prospect of native restoration from the south and Roman annexation from the north, the Ptolemies eventually had to go restorationist themselves: the Ptolemaic kings became Pharaohs with full Egyptian titulature, coronation ceremonies and capital, the Egyptian warrior aristocracy was revived, and the possessions and privileges of the priesthood were restored.[13] Had the Roman conquest not taken place, the Ptolemies would have been in danger of absorption into the Egyptian polity.

In the second place the Greeks, though a solid population in Alexandria, were elsewhere pretty much dispersed over the land. 'Alexandria at Egypt' was of course a completely non-Egyptian city and Alexandrians, despite the inevitable admixture of Egyptian elements, continued to be identified as non-Egyptians into the Christian period;[14] but unlike the Seleucids the Ptolemies founded few Greek cities, and the vast majority of immigrants were settled on the land in the villages and metropoleis of the nomes where, the ban on intermarriage notwithstanding, they soon began to go Egyptian.[15] Had the Romans not conquered Egypt, the Greeks could hardly have avoided absorption into the Egyptian ethnicity.

As it was Rome saved the Greeks. This meant the irretrievable loss of the Pharaonic polity: on the one hand the Ptolemaic successor kings and their Graeco-Egyptian aristocracy were replaced by a Roman governor and his Graeco-Roman staff;[16] on the other, Graeco-Egyptian cleruchs were replaced by a Roman army centered outside Egypt and a new mercantile elite of mixed ethnic origins and Hellenistic culture inside it.[17] Only the priests survived for a history of steady loss, not only of power and wealth,[18] but also of hope: under Marcus Aurelius they could still rebel,[19] in the later Roman period they could only mourn for Holy Egypt.[20] It similarly meant the irretrievable loss of Pharaonic culture: hieroglyphic dictionaries of the first century after Christ herald the oblivion of the script by the third,[21] while the history of the Egyptian tradition as reflected in the priestly line from Petosiris and Manetho, Chaeremon and Ptolemy of Mendes to the Hermetic writers is one of constant etiolation. It was, however, crucial that the priests stayed on: if the native polity had survived long enough in its Ptolemaic form to leave a powerful after-image, they were still around to keep it alive. They might not be able to fight, but unlike the Syrians they had at least something to mourn.[22] It was similarly crucial that the Romans neither founded cities nor colonised the countryside;[23] if the native ethnicity had survived well enough under the Ptolemies to Egyptianise Greeks, it was still able to dominate the countryside. Culturally the Egyptians might be impoverished, but unlike the Syrians, at least they knew who they were. In other words, the native civilisation had disappeared, but the identity remained: Holy Kēme could not be restored, but the residue could still restore a Holy Egypt.

It was not, however, until Christianity tightened the loose relationship between Egypt, Alexandria at Egypt, and the Roman Empire of which both were part, that such a restoration became both urgent and feasible: urgent because Egypt found itself caught by the rigid doctrinal and organisational structures of the Hellenised church, and whereas Greek Alexandria could retain both its identity and its intellectual suprem-

acy within these structures, the Egyptian countryside was faced with mere absorption; and feasible because the same doctrinal and organisational structures with which Egypt was caught for the Graeco-Roman world could also be used to articulate an Egyptian identity within it.

The first effect of Christianity was therefore to defuse the politcal tension between Alexandria and the Roman Empire[24] while at the same time exacerbating the cultural tension between Egypt and the Graeco-Roman world at large; and the first Egyptian reactions were both characteristic and ineffectual. On the one hand the Egyptian predilection for flaunting their native martyrs in the face of the outside world came to a head with the Meletian schism and the formation of the Church of the Martyrs, predominantly Coptic and Upper Egyptian in support, but ultimately doomed to failure.[25] On the other hand the native search for loopholes in the Graeco-Roman net led the Egyptians to drop out of civilisation altogether, rejecting spiritual and material culture alike:[26] in Alexandria Ammonius[27] might fight for his Greek wisdom and Origen read it into his scriptures, but St Anthony refused to acquire it[28] and Diocles renounced his;[29] likewise Alexandrians might enjoy the comforts of civilisation, but the ascetics rejected both man-made shelters and man-made food as part of the same contaminated world they were trying to forget.[30] Diagnosing the discontent of civilisation as a consequence of the Fall, they tried to recapture the innocent barbarism of Adam: as Enkidu had once been seduced by a temple prostitute into entering civilisation, so one Egyptian was seduced by a betrothed of Christ into leaving it as a 'naked old man who fed with the beasts'.[31] Nonetheless this second reaction was to have a future.

The crucial change was the development of cenobitism. We already find St Anthony gathering his followers into semi-cenobitic communities; with Pachomius the caves gave way to large monastic settlements, the hermits to thousands of inmates, solitary autonomy to the rules and regulations of increasingly powerful abbots, and by the fifth century Egypt all but unanimously subscribed to the cenobitic ideal.[32] If the anchorites still held formal pride of place, their eremitical ideal was now suspected of ascetic virtuosity; solitude, excess of zeal in prayer and in mortification of the flesh, and the quest for martyrdom were all discouraged in favour of communal life, obedience and, above all, work.[33] Henceforth all monks, whether members of Pachomian monasteries or of semi-anchorite settlements, worked so as to provide for themselves and the poor;[34] agriculture and various crafts were practised and the desert was strewn with gardens, fields, woods and orchards for the encouragement of the Christian husbandmen who believed that 'the desert was able to bring forth fruits for those who believe in God'.[35] If the desert of

Egypt built the Church of the Gentiles,[36] the Church of the Gentiles conversely built Holy Egypt in the desert. With this development the sharp dividing line between holiness and the world characteristically disappeared: the monk was of course able to devote his entire life to God, but the virtuous labourer in the world might still equal or exceed the monk in holiness;[37] all worked in their various ways for the same ideal, but the monasteries represented, so to speak, the kibbutzim.

As a result Christian Egypt came to have two distinct and potentially rival components: on the one hand Alexandria, the seat of the patriarch who ruled his compact diocese with all the organisational and intellectual resources of the Hellenised church;[38] and on the other the desert, the seat of the monks who ruled the same diocese with all the emotional resources of the Egyptian peasantry. What this rivalry could have done had it come into the open history does not relate inasmuch as it was suppressed by mutual interests. Without the support of Alexandria the monks could not acquire, let alone impose, a myth to give articulation to their own provincial identity: that was the lesson the monks had to draw from the Meletian failure.[39] But equally, without the support of the monks Alexandria could not control the diocese, let alone impose its own concepts on the Graeco-Roman world: that was the lesson Athanasius drew from the Meletian threat.[40] Consequently there was an alliance: the patriarchs received monastic support in their efforts to maintain Alexandrian intellectual preeminance, the monks received patriarchal support in their efforts to find an Egyptian faith:[41] Dioscorus defended Cyril's Monophysite creed with an army of ill-behaved monks at the Robber Council of Ephesus in 449,[42] and the Monophysite patriarch in return became the Pharaonic leader of the Copts.[43]

It was this holy, or unholy, alliance between a Greek patriarchate and an Egyptian peasantry which made the Coptic church, and from it follow its three main characteristics. In the first place the social keynote of the Coptic church is village rusticity rather than urban elitism. Egypt did, of course, have an aristocracy thanks to the third-century administrative reforms. These reforms, though here as elsewhere they involved a shift of power, had worked rather specially in Egypt: Egypt having always been a highly centralised province, the shift was not from a citizen elite to provincial bureaucrats, but from Greek bureaucrats to a provincial elite.[44] In this way the Hellenised elite of the metropoleis and villages, which Rome had seen it as in her interest to protect, came to supply most of the governors outside Alexandria by the fifth century[45] and developed into a class of local magnates who all but owned and controlled the entire province by the sixth.[46] But despite the admixture of Egyptians, this ethnically mixed and culturally Greek aristocracy could hardly claim to

represent Holy Egypt; so in contrast to Assyria it was not they but the peasants who shaped the local church. But equally, despite their Greek culture, the land they controlled had been sanctified by the Coptic church; so in contrast to Syria they were not rejected out of hand. The bleak choice between a Monophysite renunciation of power and a Melkite retention of it was not of course unknown in Egypt,[47] but it was not a very common one. The massive wealth and power of the Apions[48] thus in no way made them morally Greeks: styling themselves natives of Egypt and holding high local and central office, they contrived to retain their Monophysite creed vis-à-vis the emperor despite a moment of weakness,[49] and to redeem their worldly status vis-à-vis the Copts by lavish charity and support.[50] 'The fruits of my trafficking are for the relief of the righteous', as a merchant told Paphnutius;[51] the motto was one with which not only the Apions, but propertied Egyptians in general, might have sanctified their worldly status.[52] And if the aristocracy which Egypt legitimised as its own was not Pharaonic, it might in time have passed itself off as Ptolemaic.

In the second place, the emotional keynote of the Coptic church is ethnic and linguistic chauvinism: the honour of Egypt invoked in the Coptic account of Cambyses' invasion[53] reappears as the ethnic solidarity of Monophysite monks against Heraclius' persecution of the Copts,[54] the linguistic pride of Coptic Christians in resistance to the inroads of Arabic,[55] and the glory of Egypt in the panegyrics of Egyptian saints.[56] The gods will return to heaven and widowed of its gods Egypt, this most holy land, will die – thus the dirge of the pagan priest;[57] 'Rejoice and be glad, O Egypt, and her sons and all her borders, for there hath come to thee the Lover of Man' – thus the answer of the Coptic church.[58]

In the third place, the intellectual keynote of the Coptic church was not Alexandrian philosophy but peasant boorishness: Cyril was the last Alexandrian theologian of note, John Philoponus the last philosopher, and the surviving Coptic literature is as intellectually dull as it is emotionally vibrant. The insulation of Egypt from Alexandria which had ensured an impressive survival of the Egyptian identity was at the same time an isolation of the Egyptian heritage from Greek thought which secured only a scant survival of Egyptian truth; so that despite a certain continuity in the history of Egyptian magic, the contribution of this heritage to the culture of Coptic Egypt was limited to a few popular motifs.[59] Had Alexandria had less of a monopoly on intellectual activity in pagan Egypt, had the Hellenised priests been evenly represented all over the province, or had the province had a sophisticated urban elite of native origin, pagan Egypt might have accepted Greek thought as morally native; instead Christian Egypt rejected the pagan heritage as morally Greek.[60] Coptic Egypt

produced practical men in the style of Pachomius or Shenute, but no thinkers, and compared with Syria or Iraq it had only rudimentary monastic learning.

This is not to say that without the Arab conquests Egypt would have seceded from the Byzantine Empire either politically or culturally. It is true of course that the emperor was a figure extrinsic to Holy Egypt, and that the Egyptians insisted on dating from Diocletian's persecution, not Constantine's conversion;[61] but a Pharaoh with only ecclesiastical power, an aristocracy with only Graeco-Roman culture, and temples represented only in the desert were not the components of a viably autonomous polity; and the kibbutzniks in the desert had no illusions as to their need of an emperor in Constantinople to keep the barbarians off. Equally Coptic boorishness was hardly capable of providing the basis of a viably autonomous culture. The characteristics of the Coptic church nevertheless provided the components of a highly distinctive provinciality: an Egypt distinguished from the rest of the world by its peculiar sanctity yet linked to it as an example for mankind – in other words, an Egypt on the model enunciated by the late pagan priests;[62] or again, an Egypt distinguished from the rest of the world by its peculiar ethnicity and semi-native aristocracy yet linked to it as a member of a Graeco-Roman empire – in other words, an Egypt on the model reversed in the late Ottoman period.[63]

Unlike Egypt, Iraq accommodated not one but two provincial identities, the Assyrian and the Babylonian. Both cultures had of course suffered violent destruction on their fall a thousand years before the Arab conquests: as Nabopolassar and the Medes turned Assyria into 'heaps and ruins' in 612 B.C.,[64] so Xerxes razed the walls of Babylon, expropriated its citizens and turned its god into bullion after the revolt of 482.[65] Both identities nonetheless survived, the first under a Christian aegis, the second under a pagan.

This unusual division of labour between Christianity and paganism was a result of the differing impact of foreign rule on the two provinces. Assyria, which had neither the fabled wealth nor the strategic importance of Babylon, had been left virtually alone by the Achaemenids and Seleucids;[66] condemned to oblivion by the outside world, it could recollect its own glorious past in a certain tranquillity.[67] Consequently when the region came back into the focus of history under the Parthians, it was with an Assyrian, not a Persian let alone Greek, self-identification: the temple of Ashur was restored, the city was rebuilt,[68] and an Assyrian successor state returned in the shape of the client kingdom of Adiabene.[69] The Sasanids put an end to the autonomy of this kingdom,[70] but they did not replace the local rulers with a Persian bureaucracy: though reduced

to obedient servants of the Shahanshah, a native aristocracy therefore survived.[71] In one respect, however, their position in the Persian state was an uncomfortable one. Already under the Parthians the Shahanshahs tended to demand religious conformity in return for political significance;[72] and under the Sasanids they did so systematically, thus imposing a Persian truth on an Assyrian identity. As long as the level of integration remained low this disharmony could be disguised by syncretic manoeuvres;[73] but as the Sasanids brought the local aristocracy into closer contact with the Persian court, the meshes were closed.[74] A Persian monarchy thus did for an ethnic God in the east what an ethnic God did for Greek culture in the west, and here as elsewhere the provincials were faced with the choice between the rectification of genealogy and the rectification of faith, *taṣḥīḥ al-nasab* and *taṣḥīḥ al-dīn*. Like the provincials of the west, the Assyrians stuck to their genealogy, but unlike them they could not merely go heretical: even a heretical Zoroastrian was still conceptually a Persian, and vis-à-vis the Persians the Assyrians therefore needed a different religion altogether.[75] On the other hand, even an orthodox Christian was still only a Greek by association; vis-à-vis the Greeks a heresy therefore sufficed. Consequently, after a detour via Judaism, the Assyrians adopted Christianity and found their heresy in Nestorianism.[76]

Babylonia, by contrast, had never been left alone. Apart from its massive Jewish diaspora, it was flooded with Persian immigrants under the Achaemenids, Greeks under the Seleucids and more Persians with the Sasanids; the latter built their capital there and in due course added yet another batch of foreigners in the form of Greek and Syrian prisoners of war.[77] As a result the Babylonian polity was dissolved. It is true that the ghost of Babylon haunted lower Iraq for some two centuries in the shape of the client kingdom of Mesene which, though founded by an Iranian satrap, soon went Aramaic;[78] and there were no doubt other Aramean kings under the Parthians.[79] But in the first place the Babylonian identification of Mesene was weak,[80] and in the second place the Sasanid choice of lower Iraq as the centre of their empire hardly left much room for a native aristocracy, and whereas the Assyrians had a clear memory of their own past, the Babylonians did not.[81] One might indeed have expected the Babylonian identity to vanish altogether, and if it did survive it was not because it remembered itself in isolation, but because it transcended itself and won universal respect: the Greeks bowed in deference to Babylonian astrology and borrowed it without disguising its Chaldean origin,[82] and consequently the Chaldeans could borrow Greek philosophy without losing their identity. The fusion of Greek and Babylonian paganism generated a variety of astrological religions which, unlike the parent paganism, could hold their own against the supreme truths of Zoroastrianism, and which

unlike Christianity were possessed of an ethnic label: an Assyrian had only an identity, a Christian had only a truth, but a Chaldean had both identity and truth. In Chaldea pagans therefore survived.

Christianity did, of course, spread to Babylonia; but whereas in Assyria it was a way of sanctifying a provincial identity, in Babylonia it was a way of desanctifying two. To the highly cosmopolitan environment of lower Iraq, Christianity, like Manichaeism, was a protest against ethnic religions, not a way of acquiring one: Manichaeism transcended the Chaldean and Persian truths by combining them as lesser insights within a larger and more grandiose scheme of things, and Christianity did the same by rejecting both as identical. The Christians of lower Iraq never lacked identity: they included Persians, Greeks, Elamites, Arameans, Qaṭraye, Arabs and others.[83] Like the Assyrians, they might call themselves *Suryane* in contradistinction to the pagans; but they never shared any single identity between them: the only identity there was to inherit was Chaldean, and on conversion the Chaldean renounced his ethnicity as Magian and his culture as Zoroastrian.[84] The Assyrian Christians have a genuine precedent for their name, but Christians were only called Chaldeans by way of abuse.[85]

There were thus two distinct versions of Christianity within the Nestorian church: on the one hand the local church of Assyria, a chauvinist assertion of a provincial identity; and on the other the metropolitan church of Persia with its centre in Babylonia, a cosmopolitan assertion of a gentile truth. But if the Assyrian church was in this respect comparable to that of Egypt, its chauvinism took a rather different from. Egypt had preserved an ethnicity and a language peculiar to itself among its peasantry, whereas its aristocracy belonged to the larger Hellenised world; Assyria by contrast had an aristocracy peculiar to itself, whereas it shared its ethnicity and language with the larger Aramaic world. Hence where Coptic chauvinism was ethnic and linguistic, that of Assyria turned on the memory of a glorious past. In this connection two timely conversions served to clear the Assyrian kings of their Biblical disrepute. Firstly Sardana the son of Sennacherib, thirty-second king of Assyria after Belos and ruler of a third of the inhabited world, submitted to the monotheistic message of Jonah and instituted the Ninivite fast which saved Ninive from destruction;[86] and the fast having saved the Assyrians from the wrath of God in the past, it was reinstituted by Sabrisho' of Karkha de-Bet Selokh to save them from a plague a thousand years later.[87] Secondly, the conversion of Izates II of Adiabene to Judaism was reedited as the conversion of Narsai of Assyria to Christianity.[88] In other words the Assyrians were monotheists before Christ and Christians after him, and the past therefore led on to the present without a break. Thus the history of Karkha de-Bet

Selokh begins with the Assyrian kings and ends with the Assyrian martyrs: Sargon founded it[89] and the martyrs made it 'a blessed field for Christianity'.[90] Likewise in the seventh century before Christ all the world stood in awe of Sardana,[91] and in the seventh century after Christ the saints took his place as the 'sun of Athor' and the 'glory of Ninive'.[92]

The church in Babylonia, by contrast, had neither the ethnic and linguistic pride of Egypt nor the historical pride of Assyria. As against Egypt, they identified themselves as gentiles[93] and used both Persian and Syriac.[94] As against Assyria, they renounced the Babylonian past to the pagans: Nimrod, in Assyria an ancestral king commemorated in the names of Christian saints,[95] in Babylonia retained his identification with Zoroaster[96] and was either rejected as the originator of Persian paganism[97] or conciliated as the oracular guide of the Magians in search of Christ;[98] in either case he remained a foreigner. Likewise the tradition represented by the Christian Isho'dad of Merv is as totally detached from the Babylonian past, for all its considerable learning, as that represented by the pagan Ibn Waḥshiyya is totally in love with it, for all its considerable errors.

Both the Assyrian and the Babylonian churches, however, differed from that of Egypt in being aristocratically orientated; the first because its Assyrian identity was vested in a native aristocracy, the second because the disinvestment from a native identity permitted a full acceptance of Persian aristocratic values. Consequently the Nestorian church as such was constituted by its nobles: the endless succession of peasants in the sayings of the Egyptian fathers gives way to the endless succession of magnates in the acts of the Persian martyrs, and whereas the Egyptian magnates could only just redeem their wordly status by going Monophysite, the Nestorian sources virtually brim over with aristocratic legitimism.[99] The awe of Assyria for its local Nimrodids or Sennacheribids is matched by the metropolitan reverence for the royal descent of a Saba, Yuḥannan or Golindukht,[100] and the Nestorians were thus united in their high esteem of power, wealth and wordly renown,[101] It is true that from time to time the intolerance of the Shahanshahs precluded service at court;[102] but local magnates could and did stay in power, laymen played a prominent role in the Nestorian church, and tolerant Shahanshahs received the willing services of their Christian subjects:[103] of all laymen it was Yazdin of Kirkuk, the fiscal officer in charge of taxes, tribute and booty for Khusraw II, who was honoured as the 'defender of the church in the manner of Constantine and Theodosius'.[104] Consequently the Nestorians were similarly united in their attitude to the Persian king: all had accepted the political supremacy of the Persian Empire, and even the Assyrians could hardly hope for a Sennacheribid restoration; what they resented was the

ethnic intolerance of Zoroastrianism, and what they aimed at was therefore not secession from the rule of the Shahanshah, but his conversion.[105]

As members of an aristocratic church the Nestorians likewise differed from the Copts in having a rich secular culture: their high esteem for wordly power was matched by their high esteem for human reason, a point endorsed by Nestorian theology. Their official authority, Theodore of Mopsuestia, did of course know the traditional doctrine of the Fall, according to which an initial state of human immortality and bliss had been disrupted by sin and deteriorated progressively until the dramatic return of grace with the redemptive death of Christ. But he also taught a variant doctrine positing an initial state of imperfection from which man had progressed under divine guidance until immortality was regained with the exemplary resurrection of Christ.[106] One doctrine emphasised man's need of grace, the other his ability to help himself: if the divine instruction was to be of any effect man must necessarily be able to distinguish between good and evil and to act in accordance with his reason, and sin must therefore be an act of will and an act against better knowledge.[107] It was for this second view that the Nestorians opted, and if they did not go Pelagian[108] or reduce the redemption to a mere symbol of future immortality,[109] they certainly did play up reason at the expense of grace.[110]

The possession of a secure social and doctrinal locus for secular intellection did two things for Nestorian culture. In the first place, whereas the Coptic church was boorish, the Nestorian church was academic. Most strikingly, it acquired one of the few non-monastic schools of theology in the Near East when the school of Edessa migrated to Nisibis,[111] and Nisibis in turn spawned a series of lesser schools; and it similarly acquired a school of medicine with the settlement of prisoners of war in Gondeshapur.[112] In general the foundation of schools recurs again and again in the lives of Nestorian worthies, and few monasteries were without one.[113]

In the second place, whereas the Coptic church rejected Greek thought as morally pagan, the Nestorian church legitimised it as proleptically Christian. For it was not of course an Assyrian culture that was being taught in the Assyrian schools: the cultural impoverishment of Assyria had been hardly less thoroughgoing than that of Egypt, and just as the Egyptian heritage in Coptic literature is limited to motifs of popular stories, so the Assyrian heritage in Christian literature is limited to Aḥiqar, the vizier of the Assyrian kings.[114] But unlike the Coptic peasants, the Nestorian elite could replace what it had lost with the universal truths of Greek philosophy. The philosophers were not only translated but also exalted,[115] and in due course the Nestorians became adept enough at philosophy to export it back to the west.[116]

At the same time the fate of asceticism among the Nestorians was cor-

respondingly different from what it was among the Monophysites. Mesopotamian Christianity had begun as an ascetic movement on the Syrian pattern, with the congregational church consisting of Nazirite 'sons of the Covenant'.[117] But just as the Copts had found that they could rebuild Holy Egypt in the desert, so the Assyrians found that they could recreate an image of their polity around their aristocracy. It is not therefore surprising that, with the adoption of Nestorianism, asceticism was virtually eradicated: the 'sons of the Covenant' disappeared in all but name,[118] the celibacy of the clergy was abolished,[119] and monasticism discouraged.[120] Equally when asceticism finally returned to stay, it was in a new and different shape. As in Egypt, cenobitism had been organised on a Pachomian pattern; yet in contrast to Egypt the cenobites represented merely a preparatory stage in the spiritual carèer. As in Syria, it was the anchorites who held pride of place; yet in contrast to Syria their *raison d'être* was Evagrian.[121] Iraq thus had no kibbutzim: the Nestorians were not averse to inhabiting the desert, but they did so for the solitude it afforded, not to grow roses in the sand. But equally, Iraq had no pillar saints: the Nestorians were not averse to mortifying the flesh, but they did so less to punish it for its sins than to spare themselves the cumberous ministration to its needs for which they had neither time nor thought in their pursuit of the mystic vision of God.[122]

As against Egypt and Assyria the fragmented province of Syria never possessed any one or any two identities, and consisted instead of a whole plethora of tiny political, ethnic and religious units. In Egypt nobody remembered the days when each nome had a king, and Pharoanic titulature only just recalled that the country had once been two kingdoms; in Syria by contrast everybody knew that before the days of Augustus every city, or indeed every village, had its own king.[123] Likewise Egypt had its one and unique ethnicity, but Syria was divided up between Phoenicians, Arameans, Jews, Canaanites, Arabs and so forth; and whereas Egypt had its one and unique religion, in Syria the diversity of local kings was matched by a diversity of local baalim.

The impact of foreign conquest on this variety of small-scale identities was correspondingly destructive. On the one hand there was no Syrian Pharoah for the Nabateans or Zenobia to restore, or for the Seleucids and the Romans to inherit; and the philhellenism of the first pair is matched by the failure of the second to perpetuate any indigenous political structures.[124] And on the other hand the conquerors could not leave the countryside alone. Unlike the Ptolemies who could rule Egypt with an Alexandria against Memphis and a Ptolemais against Thebes, the Seleucids had to build a city for every city king; and where the native ethnicity of

Egypt could threaten to absorb the Greeks, the native ethnicities of Syria could only lose their individualities to merge as Aramean in contradistinction to the Greeks. Here as there, of course, the priests survived. But given the fragmented character of the traditions they represented, and their full exposure to Hellenism, their ability to conserve the native identity was necessarily a very limited one. Culturally, there was no Syrian Manetho or Berossus: Philo of Byblos, who recorded the Phoenician tradition, was not a native priest but an antiquarian with a Hellenistic love of Oriental *arcana*;[125] while Heliodorus, who may have been a priest of Emessa, wrote as a novelist with a Hellenistic love of Oriental *mirabilia*.[126] Politically, the Syrian priests had nothing to fight for and nothing to mourn: Uranius Antoninus who warded off the Persians with local Emessans was no Isidorus fighting the Romans with local *boukoloi*,[127] while the ambitions of a Julia Domna were to make Roman emperors, not Syrian kings, just as her nostalgia was for Greek paganism in general, not the rites of Holy Emessa in particular.[128]

Consequently the native polities disappeared not only materially, but also morally: just as a Eunus enthused by the *Dea Syra* to fight for his personal freedom in early Roman Sicily could only proclaim himself a Hellenistic king,[129] so a Theodoretus inspired by his Christianity to defend his cultural autonomy in late Roman Syria could use the Phoenician kings only to claim prior possession of a Jewish truth.[130] Only Edessa, which had kept up a precarious independence on the Assyrian pattern until A.D. 216, kept the memory of its local kings;[131] but whereas Adiabene was an Assyrian successor state, Osrhoene was no etiolated kingdom of Mitanni.[132] And without a past, who were the Aramean inhabitants of a Greek city ruled by an Arab dynasty between Persia and Rome?[133] The city kings necessarily disappeared from both the earth and the memories of men, and with them the identities which had been vested in them. The Roman province of Egypt was still Kēme, Kēme having *survived* the foreign conquest; but Phoenicia was merely a Roman province, Syria being the *product* of foreign conquest.[134]

Similarly, the native cultures were submerged. Whereas in Egypt Greek intellectual activities were overwhelmingly concentrated in Alexandria, Syria had many such centres. The Hellenising priests and an urban elite were found all over the land, and pagan Syria thus accepted Greek culture as morally native: Julian sacrificed at the hands of a Syrian priest, and the Syrian priest sent his son to a Greek school;[135] the emperors rewarded Syrian provincials with local office, and the Syrian provincials took a Graeco-Roman education.[136] It is therefore not surprising that Syria should have produced a string of Hellenising *literati* to which Egypt offered no quantitative or qualitative parallel: Poseidonius of Apamea

may have been a Greek by descent, but Porphyry and Iamblichus were certainly Syrians; Ammianus Marcellinus from Antioch who wrote in Latin was presumably a Greek, but Lucian of Samosata was certainly a Syrian writing in Greek; and so forth.

In these circumstances the cognitive structure of Hellenism could not, as in Egypt, reduce to leaving the natives to stew in their own superstitions. The obverse of cultural tolerance is cultural pluralism, and if the Egyptians found that their cultural market stagnated in isolation from the Hellenistic capital, the Syrians in return found theirs flooded by rival truths from the nearby cities. Cultural pluralism is of course always a destructive phenomenon, and nobody in late antiquity came through it entirely unscathed. But if the Syrians had possessed an identity solidly anchored in one polity, ethnicity, past or ethnic god, or in all four in the manner of the Jews, they would hardly have had such a disproportionate share in the Graeco-Roman age of anxiety. The Greeks and Romans themselves, having invented the civilisation, came through without undue alienation from it;[137] while the Jews, having their unique identity, could reject the civilisation without placing undue strain on their own tradition.[138] The Egyptians likewise knew who they were, even if their truths began to totter;[139] and if the universe began to seem uncertain, they had at least a time-honoured technique for making it work in magic – a native art of great antiquity in Egypt which elsewhere was merely another avenue in the general scramble for certainty and truth.[140] Conversely, the truths of the Harrānians could not totter, even if they may have had doubts as to who they were: as provincials of Babylon they possessed an astrological religion entirely above the vicissitudes of the sublunar world.[141]

But the general run of Syrians were less fortunate. If they got more than their share of anxiety, it was because they were unique in having totally lost their native identities and truths to a culture which totally abdicated the responsibility of replacing them. They were thus uniquely deprived of axioms with which to evaluate and integrate the foreign goods they were offered. On the one hand they could take nothing for granted: they had not only been widowed of their native gods, but had also forgotten what the gods used to say. And on the other hand, there was no one set of gods to replace them, but rather a disconcerting profusion of different gods with different laws for different men.[142] Without certainties they could not reject and synthesise, and without rejection or syncretism they could not keep their universe in order; and truth no longer being one, they contracted relativism, the disease of a cultural Babel in which the ancestral language of supreme truth has given way to innumerable dialects of purely local currency.[143] The loss of an axiomatic reality meant the loss of the ability to make sense of those problems which are peren-

nially threatening to engulf the human universe of meaningful order – sickness, evil, madness and death; and as the world was denuded of common-sense meaning, it was repopulated instead with nightmarish demons. The Syrians were not, of course, unique in being haunted by demons; demonic intervention was the usual fashion in which a disintegrating universe communicated its state of disorder to mankind in late antiquity.[144] But they were certainly unique in the rate and force with which these demonic communications hit them. Just as it was they who, on eating of too many trees of knowledge, had suffered the most disastrous cognitive fall, so it was they who were plagued with the most obsessive and ghoulish intruders from worlds unknown. Outside Syria these intrusions tended to represent circumscribed enclaves of meaninglessness, sin and evil in a world which could still be brought to make sense;[145] but in Syria they tended to pervade the world, defiling man and matter with an evil which surpassed human imagination.[146]

With Christianity, order and meaning returned: truth was once more one, and once more knew both the identities of the fearful intruders and the manner in which they were to be handled. As ascetics the Syrians received their weapons to fight off the evil offspring of cultural promiscuity, and as ascetics the Syrians entered the church: the 'Sons of the Covenant' who formed the early Syrian church were *nazirs*, celibates abstaining from wine and meat in the old nazirite tradition.[147] With the Christian nazirite grace returned to a fallen world: only nazirites were worthy to receive baptism and the eucharist;[148] all others were mere catechumens.

But if grace did something to offset the effects of the Fall, Paradise was still not regained. On the one hand, the Syrians did not on discovering their new truth rediscover their old identity: the Arameans of Syria were still no Phoenicians. And on the other hand, their new truth did not confer on them a new ethnicity: the Arameans of Syria were still no Jews. In theory, of course, they might have remained Arameans in the manner of the Nestorians;[149] but in practice they could not. Having lost their peculiar treasures, the Syrians could associate the Aramean identity only with the Greek paganism which had caused the loss.[150] The ability of the pagan Ḥarrānians to retain the identity is thus the obverse of its renunciation by the Christian Syrians: by virtue of the identification of Arameans with Hellenes and pagans,[151] the Ḥarrānians acquired a *milla* exactly as had the Chaldeans, that is to say a native identity fused with an eclectic paganism and a religious community to be restored one day as a polity;[152] whereas the Syrians, by virtue of the identification of *Suryane* with Christians, renounced their pagan ethnicity for a gentile Christianity and a heavenly Jerusalem to be regained only at the end of times.

The Syrians were, in other words, the double victims of a corrosive

pluralism and a gentile monotheism. As *Suryane*, they were classified with the Assyrians who had unseated their culture in the past, a misnomer they owed to the Greeks who continued to unseat it in the present.[153] As Christians, they were distinct from the Arameans who preserved what native tradition the conquerors had left. As *Suryane* they were provincials, and as *Suryane* they were also cut off from their province. Christianity could tell them who they were vis-à-vis God and the Devil, but it could not tell them who they were in this world. And as the meshes of Graeco-Roman civilisation closed on them, it was exactly who they were vis-à-vis the Greeks that came to matter.

Inasmuch as their Syrian identity was empty, one might have expected them to react by becoming Greeks – whether playing down their provincial origin to merge with the metropolitan world in the manner of the ancient Carians, or playing it up to retain a certain distinctiveness within it in the manner of the modern Pontines. If Alexander had stolen their identity, they might in return steal his to pass themselves off as *Suromaqedones*,[154] Aramaicised descendants of his Macedonian settlers – a genealogical readjustment for which the local Alexander romance would have provided a suitable vehicle of publication.

Nevertheless they didn't. The Syromacedonians were left to die without descendants, and the local Alexander romance is accordingly eschatological.[155] The reason for this apparent lack of imagination is obvious enough: that same lack of any overarching integration of truth and identity which had enabled the Assyrians to adopt Graeco-Roman Christianity without going Greek had here the effect of depriving a Greek genealogy of its attraction for the Syrians. Plato and Augustus might both possess a certain instrumental legitimacy as having contributed to the spread of Christianity in one way or another, but they could not become inherently Christian: if Plato was but a Moses speaking Attic,[156] Jesus was still no Greek; and if Augustus united the World for the coming of Christ,[157] he was still no Jew. It was only when they all fell victim to the same Arab conquest that they began to look like so many chips off the same old block of truth: for the Christians of the tenth-century Jazīra, as not for those of sixth-century Mesopotamia, Rūmī descent was to prove a real attraction.[158]

Nor could the Syrians simply remain Syrians while adopting Hellenistic culture in the manner of the Romans: nationalisation, whether of oil or culture, requires a nation, and where the Romans had an up-and-coming nation in need of a civilisation, the Syrians had a dying civilisation in need of a nation.[159] So against the early Roman adoption of an anti-Greek genealogy from Homer,[160] we have the late Syriac transcription of a Greek genealogical misnomer; against the Roman ability to emulate the Homeric epic, we have the Syrian inability to do more than translate it

for an Arab caliph;[161] against Republican Rome in which Cato defended the moral integrity of an austere national past while Scipio proceeded with the nationalisation of Greek culture, we have Christian Syria in which Severus Sebokht could only defend the cultural integrity of the non-Greek nations at large, while attempting to nationalise astronomy as Babylonian.[162]

But if they could not retain their identity and nationalise, still less could they simply reject Greek culture and go barbarian – the line taken explicitly or implicitly by the *adversus Graecos* writers from Tatian[163] to Theodoretus.[164] It is true, of course, that initially it had its rewards: Jesus was no Greek and the martyrs who received their crown by Graeco-Roman iniquity were very much the peculiar treasure of the barbarians.[165] But it was obviously a line without a future: in time the Hellenes adopted the barbarian truth, and in itself this truth neither provided an ethnicity nor sanctioned one. The Christian past was Jewish and therefore inaccessible,[166] the Christian present was gentile and therefore culturally indiscriminate. For those who had an identity, this offered a convenient escape from cultural alienation: a heavenly Jerusalem was, thank God, no serious rival to an earthly Rome or Athens. But for those who were in need of one, it meant that the Christian exile on earth became terrifyingly concrete: if the Jews had the *Jāhiliyya* and heaven the Jerusalem, there was nothing left for the Syrians but to prepare and wait for death.

Meanwhile, of course, one might attempt to circumvent the problem by insisting on the fundamental irrelevance of genealogy: Greeks are no better than barbarians, for all descend from Adam;[167] Attic is no better than other languages, for they all say the same;[168] Hellenism is no better than other cultures, for they were all equally inventive.[169] If all men were of Adam and Adam was of dust, there was no reason why the Greeks should monopolise Greek culture;[170] but equally, if Greek culture belonged to all men, there was nothing to make it specifically Syrian.[171] And so the problem remained: going Greek was no solution; nationalise Greek culture they could not because they lacked a nation – they had only spiritual ancestors; and reject it they could not because they lacked an alternative – they had only a spiritual culture.

The dilemma of the Syrians was thus analogous to that of their Punic cousins in North Africa, who had similarly managed to hang on to a tenuous ethnic and linguistic distinctiveness without much else: the Phoenicians of North Africa were no more Latins than the Syrians of Phoenicia were Greeks. But if they had avoided absorption so long as the meshes were large, they had little left to fight with when Christianity reduced them to the eye of a needle; and both were reduced to a mindless flight, a panicky stampede from civilisation and life as such, hurling them-

selves from rocks, throwing themselves at beasts of prey, setting fire to themselves, or merely wandering off to vanish in the desert, where later monks would find and marvel at their desiccated corpses.[172]

By the fourth century the Phoenicians of North Africa were of course doomed to extinction one way or the other, and against their attempted suicide we have St Augustine's reading of the Punic *salus* ('three') as an omen of their imminent absorption by Latin *salvatio*.[173] But once the Syrians had decided to abide by their genealogy, there was no question of coaxing or forcing them into absorption by Greek *sōtēria*. Christians to God and provincials to the Greeks, the question could only be how they were to make sense of their double status.

The answer is that they couldn't. It is quite possible to make a Christian virtue of a provincial identity, which is precisely what the Egyptians and the Assyrians did. But in a Christian culture it is not possible to make a provincial virtue of a Christian identity, which is what the Syrians tried. The Syrians were children of Christianity as the Pakistanis are children of Islam: in both cases the religion has defined its adherents out of their secular matrix, Aramean or Indian; and in both cases it fails to supply an alternative, Christianity because it sanctifies no ethnicity, Islam because it sanctifies one which, Pakistani efforts notwithstanding, is too remote. Like Egypt and Assyria, Syria developed its own provincial Christianity, distinguished from the rest of the Christian world by a heresy on the one hand and a monasticism of its own peculiar breed on the other. But Egypt had contents for the label, whereas Syria had to seek the contents from the label itself; and even heretical Christianity, Syrian efforts notwithstanding, does not suffice to make a man. Without an ethnicity, without a *Jāhiliyya*, and without an Athens, they had nothing to be, to mourn or to love this side of the Garden of Eden. Having only Paradise to regain, they set their eyes on the reconquest of heaven – the land to which the martyrs had departed, not the land from which they had come.

Essentially the Syrians remained nazirites.[174] The Hellenised concept of the church did of course win through: by the end of the third century or the beginning of the fourth[175] the former catechumens had been admitted to full membership, with the 'Sons of the Covenant' becoming a group apart, gradually brought under ecclesiastical control and assimilated to the cenobites on the one hand and the lower clergy on the other;[176] thereafter the view that every Christian is an ascetic survived only among the Messalians and other heretics.[177] But Syria had little use for the *ekklēsia*; if the church could no longer be a Covenant, it became instead overwhelmingly monastic, and within its monasticism overwhelmingly orientated towards the solitary nazirite.[178] Where the Copts had their kibbutzniks and the Nestorians their cultivated mystics, the Syrian church

was dominated by men who had undertaken to stay alive, but little more. For them the world remained in essence a Sodom and Gomorrha in which there could be nothing holy and to which the monk should never look back; once he had decided to join himself to those lone athletes of Christ who did battle with themselves until they had command of the demons,[179] the only proper role in which he could have dealings with the world he had left was that of the exorcist.[180] The Egyptian ideal was for monks to work, sleep, eat and pray together, and to work even at the expense of prayer; but for the Syrians the cenobites could only fall short of the ideal of using one's hands only for prayer, enduring hunger, thirst and vigils alone.[181] The Copts left one civilisation to build another in the desert, fighting their Greek demons by making the desert bloom; but the Syrians climbed onto pillars, leaving mankind for heaven to fight the world by mortification of the flesh. The Copts could hope to sanctify Egypt, the Syrians only to sanctify themselves, to ascend to heaven by a descent into hell and wait for the grace of God to shine forth from the filth of their earthly clay.[182]

Nor was there much the Syrians could do with the Hellenised *sacerdotium*. Just as it was the 'Sons of the Covenant' and the ascetics rather than the congregations who represented the Syrian church, so also it was the lay ascetics rather than the sacerdotal ministers who tended to accumulate and distribute the grace: miraculous powers to exorcise, cure diseases, raise the dead and the like proliferated outside the official channels of divine beneficence, and the ascetics on more than one occasion arrogated to themselves the right to dispense the sacraments.[183] The ascetics could not, of course, hope to oust the sacerdotal hierarchy; but equally, the bishops could not hope to stop the extra-sacerdotal flow of grace. The ensuing rivalry between acquired and ascribed grace accordingly issued in compromise at an early stage: the bishops were almost invariably chosen from among the ascetics,[184] and ascetics excelling in the acquisition of grace would tend to acquire the official status from which such powers were supposed to derive.[185]

Nor could the Syrians make much of the diocese. What Antioch reconstituted was the Roman diocese of the Orient, not a polity of yore,[186] and there was thus little pressure to staff it exclusively with Syrians. Syrians did of course predominate, but other barbarians, be they Ethiopians, Armenians, Christians from Persia,[187] or Egyptians,[188] were in no way excluded. No terrestrial organisation could be a Syrian Jerusalem: Egypt might hallow its visible church, but Syria could hallow only individuals.

If Syria found the Hellenised church unhelpful, the latter in return found Syria unwieldy. In the first place the patriarchate of Antioch was no monarchy: where Cyril ruled his subjects directly in the manner of

Pharaoh, John of Antioch inherited the city kings in the shape of insubordinate metropolitans. In the second place the diocese had no armies: where Cyril could recruit solid phalanxes of Coptic monks, John of Antioch could at the most have raised stylite guerrillas or appealed to barbarian intervention.[189] It is therefore not surprising that an alliance between a native monkhood and a Greek patriarchate, such as constituted the Coptic church in Egypt, should have failed to come through in Syria. On the one hand Syria failed to adopt its own heresy, despite the fact that Nestorius was patriarch of Constantinople and had the support of John of Antioch when he clashed with Cyril.[190] And on the other, when Syria finally got its Egyptian heresy, it did so independently of Antioch at the hands of Jacob Baradaeus – who was not a patriarch and prefect in the grand style of the Egyptian hero, but a poor and persecuted saint in the ascetic tradition, traversing the region on foot and assisted in the last resort by an Arab king.[191]

Where the Coptic church was constituted by its peasants, and the Nestorian church by its nobles, that of Syria was thus based on its ascetics. This meant, of course, that Syria was in even less of a position to nourish hopes of political – as opposed to eschatological – secession from the Roman Empire: there was no alternative to hallow. True, a messianic king shall come forth from Baalbek, but only at the end of times when we shall all be dead;[192] and in the meantime one wordly polity is likely to be as good as another.[193] But it obviously also meant that Syria could not legitimise its wordly aristocracy, whether Greeks long settled in Syria like Urbanus,[194] or Syrians long steeped in Greek culture like the parents of Theodoretus.[195] Staying in power, wealth and office, as Tatian rightly saw, was staying in unholy madness, while withdrawing was holy common sense;[196] and whoever clung to the world stood condemned as a Melkite Greek,[197] while whoever wished to join the Monophysite *Suryane* must necessarily renounce it.[198] Only in Edessa, which had indeed been blessed in this world, could a Monophysite creed sanctify a secular nobility.[199] Elsewhere they would give up their offices, sell their estates, distribute the proceeds to the poor and put away their families in a typically drastic act of conversion; the pattern was thus a radical break with a past in which the fruits of their trafficking could not be for the relief of the righteous,[200] a sudden renunciation whereby even the great became worthy to despise the world and treat its affairs with contempt,[201] adopting a holy life as anchorites or wandering mendicants, begging scorn for their righteous souls.[202]

Equally, the ascetic basis of the Syrian church meant that Syria could not legitimise its wordly learning, and the extensive Hellenic flotsam adrift in Syriac literature could thus never quite find *terra firma*. This is

not to say that there were no Hellenising priests: in this respect Syria does not compare too badly with Assyria.[203] Nor is it to say that the ascetics were boors: Syrian monks were no Egyptian peasants.[204] But if the thoroughgoing Hellenisation of pagan Syria meant that there was a good deal of Greek learning around,[205] it also meant that the Christian receptacle was correspondingly brittle: as pagans the Syrians had accepted Greek thought and lost their identity, as Christians pagan thought threatened to undermine their new and only identity. Syria accordingly possessed schools and monasteries in which the Greek heritage was an intrinsic part of the syllabus, producing churchmen skilled in a Greek grammar and rhetoric founded in pagan writings, who went on to translate the philosophers, write commentaries on Aristotle and compose scientific treatises;[206] but Syria also possessed schools and monasteries in which the Greek heritage had been removed from the syllabus, producing churchmen skilled in a Syriac grammar and rhetoric founded in the native scriptures,[207] who went on to compose lives of the saints, discourses on faith and treatises against the poisonous wisdom of the Greeks.[208] Thus on the one hand we have Theodoretus defending the philosophers as almost Christian, while on the other we have Ephraim attacking everything Greek as irredeemably pagan;[209] on the one hand Jacob of Edessa's desire to teach Greek, on the other the angry refusal of the monks to learn it.[210]

The uneasy coexistence – as opposed to alliance – of a Hellenised church with a Syrian Covenant which dominated Syrian Christianity is therefore also represented in the domain of epistemology: on the one hand there were men like Philoxenus who defended the integrity of human reason, and on the other men like Rabbula to whom it was radically corrupt.[211] For Philoxenus, an Evagrian ascetic, nothing much was wrong with the world except that it was engrossed in the trivial problems of everyday life;[212] it was the world of the many who might be justified by virtuous behaviour, or in other words by the law by which Jesus himself had been justified before his baptism;[213] only the few who had detached themselves from mundane preoccupations could actually reach perfection and be justified by divine grace.[214] For Philoxenus faith was new eyes and ears,[215] a supplement to our natural poverty of senses,[216] a fourth dimension in which the intellect might grasp the inaccessible reality behind the fleeting phenomena of the world and perceive the unmovable majesty of God.[217] Rabbula, by contrast, knew only a fallen world in which sin had vitiated the flesh, dimmed the intellect and eaten away the very foundations of human existence;[218] and just as the law was insufficient – apart from grace man cannot know what constitutes a God-fearing life – so the hope of perceiving inaccessible realities was swept away – man's feeble intellect can never understand what it knows by grace.[219] One must therefore

believe, love and obey, not seek, search and inquire,[220] for by the human will to divine grace man can hope to live a virtuous life: one can grow good fruits in the sunshine, but only blind one's eyes by staring at the sun.[221] To Rabbula faith was not a supplement to reason, but precisely an alternative to it.[222] Philoxenus believed so that he might see, and sought so that he might find; he sold his wordly goods to purchase secret wisdom[223] and crucified his flesh to beatify his intellect. But Rabbula believed so that he might be cured, and obeyed so that he might be redeemed; he sold his wordly goods to rid himself of demons, and crucified both flesh and intellect to beatify his heaven.

Philoxenus was hardly the only defender of reason in Syria, but equally Rabbula was not the only obscurantist: his epistemology has echoes elsewhere in Syriac literature,[224] just as his career echoes that of countless Syrian ascetics who neither made the desert bloom nor practised Christian philosophy, but were and remained nazirites. Behaviourally and epistemologically, the Syrian ascetic was thus all of a piece: armed with the scriptures from which he drew his identity, his faith and his vocation, he set out to fight his own peculiar devils in the pursuit of grace.

There was thus a certain similarity between the Syria of A.D. 200 and the Syria of A.D. 600. Then as now an urban elite and a Hellenised priesthood coexisted with a native tradition: in the cities Christian *officiales* had taken the place of pagan *curiales*, and Christian priests, rhetors, sophists, scholastics and philosophers had replaced their pagan counterparts; while in the countryside a native population looked to the desert for the guidance and inspiration it had previously had from its native gods. But if the cultural integration effected by Christianity had failed to create an alliance between the two, it had drastically changed the polemical balance of power: by A.D. 600 the native tradition, which four hundred years earlier was steadily losing in both plausibility and intellectual resources under the impact of foreign truths, had turned into a well-equipped and coherent alternative. In the first place the Syrian nazirite, for all his rejection of the imperial world, was a product of the imperial culture exactly as were Syria and the *Suryane*. He thus had sophisticated cultural resources at his disposal, and where Coptic peasants could only turn Ephesus into a robber council by a kind of intellectual *jacquerie*, Rabbula could present his obscurantism for a learned audience in Constantinople.[225] In the second place, the nazirite differed from the imperial culture, for all his being a product of it, in having a solid anchorage in the province. The imperial flotsam could of course remain afloat in Syria by the sheer fact that it happened to be imperial; but that was a historical accident, and if the political and ecclesiastical integument of the Graeco-Roman world should burst it was the nazirite the Syrians would save, for he was all they had.

PART III

THE COLLISION

8

THE PRECONDITIONS FOR THE FORMATION OF ISLAMIC CIVILISATION

Islamic civilisation is the outcome of a barbarian conquest of lands of very ancient cultural traditions. As such it is unique in history. There is of course no lack of experiences of barbarian conquest in the history of civilisation; but in so far as the barbarians do not destroy the civilisation they conquer, they usually perpetuate it. Nor is there any lack of barbarian transitions to civilisation in the history of barbarism; but in so far as the barbarians do not take millennia to evolve a civilisation of their own, they usually borrow it. But the relationship of the Arabs to antiquity does not fit any of these patterns. It is not of course particularly remarkable that the Arabs were neither so barbarous as to eradicate civilisation nor so original as to invent it for themselves. But they were indeed unusual in that they did not, sooner or later, acquire or lose themselves in the civilisation they conquered. Instead, the outcome of their collision with antiquity was the shaping of a very new civilisation out of very ancient materials, and that at such a speed that by the time the dust of conquest had settled the process of formation was already well under way. Any attempt to understand this unique cultural event must begin by showing what it was about the conquerors and the conquered that made such an outcome possible.

Any aegis for the formation of a new civilisation in the world of antiquity had of necessity to be provided by its enemies. The crucial fact about these enemies is that they were of two kinds. In the first place there were the external barbarians to whom we have already referred, living out their 'life apart' beyond the frontiers of the civilised world. In itself their existence posed only the familiar threat of barbarian conquest: that is to say, they possessed the force to overthrow civilisation, but not the values to replace it.[1] In the second place, antiquity possessed a more unusual enemy in the shape of the Jews inside its frontiers, living out their rejection of the Graeco-Roman world in the ghetto. Their existence constituted a moral condemnation of civilisation: that is to say, they had the values with which to reject the prevailing culture, but even in their own diminutive homeland lacked the force to overthrow it. Neither party on its own could thus have provided any sort of aegis for the formation of a new civilisation.

There never was any such thing as Judaic civilisation, and there never could have been any such thing as barbarian civilisation. And yet there was a certain obvious complementarity: if barbarian force and Judaic values could be brought into conspiracy, it was just possible that they could achieve together what they could not bring about apart.

At first sight the conditions for such a conspiracy were remarkably widespread. In both east and west, after all, the world of antiquity succumbed eventually to barbarian conquest and Judaic values. There was however a fundamental difference: in the west the Germanic invasion and the spread of Christianity were discrete historical processes.

On the one hand, the spread of Christianity was no military conquest. Christianity, like Hagarism, was the product of the preaching of Judaic messianism in a gentile environment. But in the Christian case the messianism was already a pragmatic failure in its original Jewish context, an ugly end to a career in popular medicine, before it was marketed among a gentile population that was civilised, ethnically heterogeneous, and politically inert. The years that St Paul spent in Arabia following his conversion were without significance in the religious politics of Christianity: the founder had already instructed his followers that the Christ was not in the desert (Mt. 24:26). Instead, Christianity in its Pauline form set about the peaceful permeation of the civilised world. This decision provided both the motive and the means for a far-reaching transformation whereby the more angular features of the Judaic heritage were sublimated into metaphor. It provided the motive in that Judaism could not render itself marketable in the civilised world without coming to terms with it, and the means in that the prevailing Hellenistic culture of this world was peculiarly adept at such sublimation. The literal truths of Biblical genealogy were pronounced allegories, thereby abrogating the sanctity of Jewish ethnicity and making it possible for the gentiles to become children of the promise; and at the same time a cult of the spirit dissolved the forbidding harshness of the letter of the law, and the concrete hope of a redemption of Israel in this world was replaced by the pious expectation of the salvation of the faithful in the next. This sublimation of the Judaic heritage was not of course by any means complete: Christianity at large is not Marcionism, just as Chinese Buddhism at large is not Zen. But it remains that Christianity had solved the problem of extricating the essence of Judaic values from the ghetto by the expedient of leaving their substance behind. Judaism in its Christian form had converted civilisation at the cost of accepting it.[2]

On the other hand, the Germanic invasions were no religious movement. The Germans had of course their barbarian force, and they might begin by wielding it truculently enough: one Gothic ruler in the early

fifth century set out to replace Romania by Gothia.[3] But for one thing the Goths, refugees from the Huns who became federates of the Romans, lacked the force to create any very evocative sort of Gothia; and for another, even if they had been able to set up a Gothic empire with a capital in the homeland and an imperial Gothic law in the manner of the Mongols, their achievement would still not have sufficed to provide an aegis for the remaking of civilisation. For that they needed forceful and religious values, and religiously they hardly existed. The Germans began for the most part as pagans because they came from outside, and they ended up as Christians because they were now inside. Neither paganism nor Christianity could provide what was needed: Germanic paganism was too remote from the current religious standards of the civilised world, Christianity had already accepted and converted this world, and neither was historically fused with the conquest. The residue of the Germanic invasions was thus a merely ethnic one, a vernacular heritage that survived to provide the eventual basis, not of a new civilisation, but of national antipathies within one. The barbarian force of the Germans, like the Judaic values of the Christians, could cross the frontier into civilisation only at the cost of succumbing to it.

There was of course a certain yoking of force and value in the form of Gothic Arianism. But in the light of what has been said above, there was clearly little prospect of it proving an effective conspiracy against civilisation. In the first place, there was the way in which the Goths took it up.[4] Arianism had of course reached the Goths before they crossed the Danube, but it had not yet begun to convert them on any scale. Ulfila, like Muḥammad, had his *hijra*; but his flight was from Gothic persecution to Roman imperial protection.[5] And when in due course the Goths followed him as invaders, they did so for the most part as pagans entering a philo-Arian empire. It was only when the Goths reached the west, and began to convert to Arianism in a predominently orthodox environment, that the alliance between Christian heresy and barbarian ethnicity was formed. In the second place, in taking up with Arianism the Goths were adopting not a religion of their own but an existing heresy of an existing faith, Christianity. Despite the vocabulary of Christological insult, Arians were no Jews. On the one hand Arianism shared with orthodox Christianity its acceptance of the prevailing civilisation: it was in no position to identify the Graeco-Roman world as a cultural Canaan. And on the other hand Arianism belonged with orthodox Christianity to a form of Judaism purged of ethnic identification: it was in no position to sanctify the Gothic tribes by casting them in the role of the conquering Israelites. So that even if Arianism had been fused with Gothic conquest in historical terms, it would have lacked the ideological resources for exploiting the opportunity.

The resulting association of Arian heresy with Gothic ethnicity was in some ways quite close. Arianism became for the Goths 'our catholic faith' in contradistinction to 'the Roman religion',[6] and there was a definite sense that it was a religion for Goths and not for others.[7] The alliance did something to prolong the survival of both its constituents: it protected Arianism against absorption into orthodox Christianity, and it shored up the Gothic identity against assimilation into Roman ethnicity. But neither the Arian nor the Gothic component was in any way impermeable to the prevailing culture. So there were Gothic kings and Arian ecclesiastics, but no Gothic 'Abd al-Malik: in Visigothic Spain the bureaucracy went on using Latin, and the reformed coinage bore no Arian legends.[8] Gothic Arianism was quite an effective defence of a heresy and an ethnicity, but it had no prospect of creating a civilisation.

Matters could easily have worked out in much the same fashion in the east. If Islam had spread in the pacific manner of Christianity, it would of necessity have learned to accommodate the traditions of the peoples it converted – to seek out Unknown Gods, to present itself as the sort of truth that existing elites might care to recognise, to render its scripture into idioms they understood.[9] Islam has on occasion proved strikingly flexible when confronted with syncretic terms of trade of the kind faced by early Christianity: the exotic adaptions of a pacific Islam to the indigenous traditions of Java or Dagomba[10] hardly provide instances of the tag that 'Islam destroys what went before it'.[11] Equally the cultural nerve of Islam has not always held in contexts where Islam itself has been exposed to alien conquest: witness the weakening of religious intransigence and the acceptance of the claims to legitimacy of a non-Islamic law and lineage in the north-east in the aftermath of the Mongol conquest.[12] If the actual Islam of history could bend in this way before the unconquered traditions of Indic Java or pagan Dagomba, and give ground to the conquering traditions of the Mongols or in due course the west, then *a fortiori* an Islam that had spread peacefully from the beginning could quite conceivably have ended as the religion of a Roman polity with a Greek civilisation, or as a gentile faith embracing a plurality of Muslim peoples retaining their ancestral cultures alongside their new religion.[13]

Equally the Arab conquests did not have to take the form of a religious movement. Had the Middle East been invaded by pagan worshippers of al-'Uzzā and al-Lāt in a less fleeting reenactment of the Nabatean conquest of Syria, the religious trajectory of the conquerors would probably not have differed much from that of the Franks.[14] Had the conquests been initiated under the aegis of the Lakhmids or the Ghassānids, had they issued in some more durable version of the Palmyrene empire in close association with the interests of one or other of the major Christian heresies, it is unlikely

that the cultural significance of the Arabs would have been much different in kind from that of the Arian Goths. In neither case would the conquerors have been in a position to leave behind them more than the political and cultural foundations of an eventual nationalism comparable to those of the Hungarians or the Orthodox Slavs.[15]

Instead, barbarian conquest and the formation of the Judaic faith which was eventually to triumph in the east were part of the same historical event. What is more, their fusion was already explicit in the earliest form of the doctrine which was to become Islam. The preaching of Muḥammad integrated a religious truth borrowed from the Judaic tradition with a religious articulation of the ethnic identity of his Arab followers. Thus where Arian doctrine was only a truth and Gothic ethnicity only an identity, Hagarism was both. In the course of their subsequent evolution, the Hagarenes developed their truth almost beyond recognition and embedded their identity in an elaborate pagan past. But on the one hand, the religious truths they selected, being initially Judaic and never more than marginally Christian, placed a wider gap between them and their subjects than mere heresy could do in the west: their heresy was more than a heresy. And on the other hand, their Shinto remained less than a Shinto: their barbarian identity was expressed in terms sufficiently Biblical to be intelligible and defensible in the religious language of the world they had conquered. At the same time, the organic link between their truth and their identity remained. The structure of Hagarene doctrine thus rendered it capable of long-term survival, and the consolidation of the conquest society ensured that it did survive. Judaic values had acquired the backing of barbarian force, and barbarian force had acquired the sanction of Judaic values: the conspiracy had taken shape.

This shape fortified the Hagarenes against the cultures they had conquered in two basic ways. In the first place, there was no call for the Judaic values adopted into Hagarism to go soft in the manner of Christianity. Historically, these value had left the ghetto not to convert the world but to conquer it; and conquerors have no need to appeal to the cultural values of their subjects. Conceptually, the Hagarenes separated themselves from the Jews by transposition rather than sublimation:[16] instead of developing the notion of a 'verus Israel' in the manner of gentile Christianity, they had simply substituted Ishmaelite ethnicity for Israelite;[17] and instead of elaborating a Pauline antinomianism, they went on to replace the letter of the law of Moses with the letter of the law of Muḥammad. They thus preserved that combination of a literal ethnicity with the letter of a religious law which had constituted the basis of the Judaic 'life apart'.[18] Allāh, like Yahweh, was a jealous God.

In the second place, the sanction which Judaic values could confer on

barbarian force was a very evocative one. The Jews might live in the ghetto, but the myth which articulated their apartness from the Canaanite world around them was that of the Israelite tribes in the desert.[19] Thus the replacement of Israelites by Ishmaelites in the role of the chosen people did more than consecrate the ethnic identity of the conquerors: it also invested their erstwhile 'life apart' in the desert with a distinctly religious aura. Hagarism had caught and fused the alienation from civilisation of both the ghetto and the desert. It was as if by some drastic syncopation of Israelite history the tribal conquest of Canaan had led directly into the Pharisaic resistance to Hellenisation: where Judaism had to some extent received the civilising imprint of a Near-Eastern monarchy, Hagarism retained the harshness of the Rechabite life in the wilderness. The Hagarenes thus rejected the cultural achievements of the conquered peoples as so many Canaanite abominations, and laid the foundations of their cultural life in the tribal past of their Arabian homeland.

The contrast between east and west was thus a fundamental one. In the west the material impact of the Germanic invasions was something of a catastrophe: the empire disintegrated, its bureaucratic machinery disappeared, and its culture entered a dark age. The role of Christian values in this story was by contrast strikingly benign. It is of course true that the Christians of the Roman Empire had made a point of deeming themselves in exile. But their exile was a transcendental one which they served out in the comfort of their own homes: *in sedibus suis peregrinos esse se noverunt*, and *in sedibus suis* they studied the writings of the pagan past. It hardly bespeaks a deep cultural alienation from the world of antiquity that Augustine should respond to the Vandal invasion by retiring to his deathbed with Plotinus on his lips.[20] It was thus appropriate that the survival of antiquity in the centuries following Augustine's death was due in large measure to the conservative role of the Christian church, and natural that the Christians of the middle ages should see themselves as the legitimate if unworthy heirs of this dilapidated inheritance. But in the east the roles of the Germans and the Christians are, so to speak, reversed. For all the initial destruction brought about by the Arab conquests, the fact of empire survived together with much of its machinery, and a cultural level was maintained such that in due course the Islamic world was in a position to give a massive transfusion of Hellenic learning to the west. But if the Hagarene conquests did far less violence to antiquity than those of the Germans, their concepts did far more than those of the Christians. The Hagarene exile, like that of the Jews, was of this world, and it therefore carried with it a far more concrete estrangement from its cultural environment: even Ash'arites died repenting of the truck they had had with the impious wisdom of the Greeks.[21] The Hagarenes were thus

precluded by their faith from any direct inheritance of the traditions of the world they had conquered. The first centuries of Islam were by no means a dark age in the afterlife of antiquity; but the light which played on them was to be subjected to a very alien polarisation.

This fusion of force and value, though necessary if the conquerors were to create a new civilisation, was far from sufficient to enable them to do so irrespective of cultural environment. Two obvious negative points may do something to suggest what it was about the seventh-century Middle East that rendered it propitious terrain for such a venture. In the first place, had the Arabs conquered a Middle East made up of a plurality of integral traditions, each an identity and a truth unto itself, they would have been too much in the position of the Mongols: the unprecedented opportunity of these Central Asiatic conquerors to mix the resources of the disparate civilisations they had conquered fell short of being a change to fuse them. In the second place, had the Arabs conquered a Middle East integrated into a unitary cultural entity, they would have been too much in the predicament of the successive barbarian conquerors of China: confronted with so unitary a definition of what civilisation was and must be, such barbarians could only surrender more or less gracefully to the inevitable cultural assimilation; they were in no position to set about reshaping what they had overrun.[22]

These conceptually distinct possibilities are also the poles of a historical evolution. The history of civilisation in the Middle East begins with plurality – Sumeria and Egypt – and might in due course have issued in a solidly Byzantine civilisation, with the Iranian menace eliminated and the ancient traditions of the Fertile Crescent as irrelevant as those of Anatolia had in fact become. Byzantium, that is to say, might eventually have brought about the homogenisation which was in historical fact the achievement of Islam. In this perspective it is obvious that the reasons for the conduciveness of the seventh-century Middle East must be sought in its historically intermediate position between the two poles.

This intermediate position needs to be spelled out in three ways. In the first place, the Middle East – Iran apart – was a region whose peoples had lost their ancient civilisations and replaced them by borrowing from others; but they had done so without forgetting that they had once been civilised, and without merging their identities in those of the proprietors of the traditions they borrowed. It was a situation to which there was little parallel in the Latin west: the Spanish had acquired an integral civilisation and merged their identity into that of the Romans who had brought it to them, while the Berbers had retained an integral barbarism uncontaminated by

civilisation.[23] There thus existed over much of the Middle East a disjunction between alien truth and native identity.

In the second place, the loss of their own civilisations had rendered the peoples of the Middle East provincials of a rather special culture, Hellenism. And Hellenism, for all its ethnic origins, was as we have seen well suited to become the culture of a cosmopolitan elite.[24] It had also, as we have seen, developed historically in a fashion which drew some of the sting of both its ethnic origin and its social elitism. The Middle East had thus undergone a marked homogenisation of cultural truth, and the cultural truth had correspondingly lost much of its initial particularity.

In the third place, the Middle East had undergone a religious analogue to this cultural process. Having borrowed its culture from the Greeks, it now took its religion from the Jews; and just as the Greek identity of cultural truth had been greatly etiolated with the demise of the Macedonian state and the collapse of the *polis*, so the Jewish identity of monotheism lost its sting altogether with the demise of the Jewish state and the extrication of the gospel from the ghetto. Here again, the Middle East had undergone a homogenisation of truth, and in this case the truth itself had severed its links with its ethnic past.

These relationships between the provincials of the Middle East and their borrowed truths are fundamental to the formation of Islamic civilisation. First, there is the relationship of the provincials to their culture. From the point of view of the culture itself, this relationship meant that there was a certain potential complementarity between Hellenism and Hagarism: the structure of the Hellenic conquest society having dissolved to leave a civilisation thin on identity, and the structure of the Hagarene conquest society being about to dissolve to leave an identity thin on civilisation, there was a basis here for a cultural deal such as was inconceivable as between Hagarism and Iran. From the point of view of the Arabs, the provincial character of the culture they encountered rendered it less overpowering – it was in this respect wise to conquer Syria without Byzantium, much as it was prudent to take Spain without Rome; while at the same time their relative familiarity with the peoples of the Fertile Crescent – the product of geographical and linguistic proximity and of a long history of Arab cultural clientage – made civilisation in this provincial form that much more accessible to them. And from the point of view of the provincials themselves, the very special character of their provinciality rendered them a strikingly appropriate group to act as cultural intermediaries. The alien character of their truths – especially in the case of Hellenism – and the etiolated character of their identities – above all in the case of Syria – meant that they were not so much the lords of culture as its merchants. The Iranian who converted to Islam was a traitor to the entire range of an

integral national past; but when the Hagarene conquest decreed the dismantling of the merely adjunctive unity of the Byzantine tradition, the provincials could act as asset-strippers without any comparable sense of *trabison des clercs*. In short, the relationship of the provincials to their culture made it possible for the Hagarenes to expose themselves to civilisation only in a form strained through a particular set of provincial filters.

Secondly, the relationship of the provincials to their Judaic faith had significant cultural potentialities. Most obviously, the fact that Christianity and Hagarism were alike adaptions of the same Judaic truth conferred on the faith of the conquerors an intelligibility which, in the pagan Middle East of a few centuries before, it could not conceivably have enjoyed. At the same time the fact that the Middle East now possessed not one but two accredited international currencies of truth gave rise to the possibility of speculating in one against the other: where the Nabateans on conquering Damascus issued Philhellenist coins in inevitable allegiance to the culture they had vanquished, the Hagarenes could issue philomonotheist coins against it; and conversely, the provincials could sell Hellenism to the conquerors without treason either to their ancestors or their God. But it was above all the difference between the two currencies that was significant: it was after all no accident that among the victims of Christian intolerance, it was the Jews fleeing from Heraclius rather than the philosophers fleeing from Justinian whose exodus issued in the raising of the Arabian tribes[25]. For in adopting even a watered-down version of Judaism, civilisation had landed itself with a sort of ideological Achilles' heel.[26] Hellenism had as little use for the rudeness of barbarian tribes as Confucianism;[27] but Christianity, as a faith derived from the Israelite tradition, was at least open to the insidious suggestion that the rudeness that was a vice to civilisation might yet be a monotheist virtue. What this meant for the Arabs themselves when they re-enacted the conquest of Canaan, we have already considered; the point to be underlined here is the subtle change in the ideological scenario that comes about when the Canaanites themselves are the committed devotees of a somewhat Canaanised Yahweh cult. This time the potential barbarian fifth-column in civilisation was not restricted to harlots.[28]

These *a priori* considerations have of course to be related to the actual shape of the Arab conquest; and the dominating contrast here is that between Iran and Byzantium. Iran was no asset to barbarians engaged in reshaping a civilisation: an integral tradition only mildly affected by the truths of the Greeks and the Jews, the Arabs were culturally ill-advised enough to swallow it whole. Had Iran been all that they conquered, their chances of creating a civilisation would have been minimal; and as it was,

Iran was clearly their greatest liability. In the event, however, a number of factors helped to draw the worst of its teeth. Most obviously, Iran was to some extent lost in the wider field of conquests. More subtly, there was a certain disarming of the Iranian metropolis through a combination of circumstances: on the one hand the Sasanian capital – for geographical reasons already partly manifest with the Achaemenids – lay outside the ethnic homeland of Iran in the cosmopolitan milieu of lower Iraq; and on the other the Hagarene capital – for reasons arising from the early political history of the Hagarenes – was in the crucial period following the conquests located not in the Iranian metropolis but in a Byzantine province. As a result the wreckage of the Sasanian metropolis was left to rot without either the support it would have enjoyed had it been situated in its own ethnic heartland, or the attention it would have compelled had it been the site of the Hagarene capital.

The political geography of the Hagarene relationship to the Byzantine world was very different: a tradition that could be taken to pieces was itself geographically truncated. Unlike Iran, Byzantium had its political centre in what was relatively speaking its ethnic heartland, and by the same token far away from the provincials of the Fertile Crescent: the Greeks of Syria were nothing beside the Persians of Iraq. And in contrast to their rapid and complete conquest of Iran, the Arabs left Byzantium and Hellenised Anatolia unconquered into the late middle ages. The Hagarenes thus aptly maximised their cultural initiative when they demoted the Sasanid metropolis to provincial status and set up their own in a severed Byzantine province. And it was in the intersection of barbarian monotheism with this civilised provinciality that Islamic civilisation was born.

9

THE FATE OF ANTIQUITY: I. THE HAGARISATION OF THE FERTILE CRESCENT

The interaction of Hagarism with the provinces of the Fertile Crescent is at once the most crucial and the most complex process in the formation of the new civilisation. It is also a process in the analysis of which the fates of the provinces inside this civilisation on the one hand, and their contributions to it on the other, are in the last resort inseparable. Yet it is simplest to start one-sidedly with the crude historical fact that the Fertile Crescent was sooner or later overwhelmingly Islamicised and Arabised. It is useful to begin here with the variant trajectories of the different communities of Iraq.

The weakness of the Christian position in Iraq was a dual one: the aristocratic structure of their church rendered the Christians socially vulnerable to conquest by a jealous God, and the gentile nature of their truth made it relatively easy for them to forsake it for another. But although these points applied equally to the provincial church of Assyria and the metropolitan church in Babylonia, there was nevertheless a difference between the two in respect of the mechanics of decline. The Assyrian church was based almost exclusively on a landed aristocracy, and both aristocracy and peasants were almost exclusively Arameans. The Assyrians had accordingly taken advantage of Yahweh's Christian gentility to sanctify the after-image of their own Assyrian polity, and though the Aramean ethnicity was in itself both weak and diffuse, as Assyrians the Christians of northern Mesopotamia enjoyed an ethnic, social and historical solidarity which was both worldly and transcendental: unlike the metropolitan Christians they were not *only* children of the promise and brothers in Christ. Here, therefore, nobles and peasants stuck it together. If the Muslims had been prepared to tolerate a local aristocracy with a local faith, the Christians might have survived as an Adiabene under Arab hegemony; conversely, if the Muslims had volunteered to sanctify the aristocracy as their own, the Christians might perhaps have converted together in a Muslim after-image of Adiabene. But in practice the Muslims envinced no such tolerance and the nobles had no such interest in converting. The result was that nobles and

peasants alike remained Christians,[1] the nobles gradually declining into peasants,[2] and the peasants declining into defenceless victims of the bedouin marauders who assailed them from the desert and the Turkish and Mongol armies which marched across their land between the centres of civilisation. With the loss of their nobles they no longer had any representatives to keep them going, and they had never possessed an ethnic faith to keep them from converting: even a Ninive was no substitute for a Zion, just as even obscurantist priests[3] were no surrogate for rabbis; and although they refused to vanish altogether from the earth, it was a sorry remnant of Assyria the Europeans were to excavate along with the ruins of their past.

By contrast the Christians in Babylonia had a predominantly Persian aristocracy in a predominantly Aramean countryside on the one hand, and an urban elite of similarly diverse origins on the other. Here, then, Yahweh's Christian gentility had been used to desanctify the Persian polity so that Christians might accept it, and here equally the ethnic, social and historical continuity of the church was purely transcendental. This did of course make the metropolitan church very flexible: what the Nestorians had rendered to a secular King of Kings they would not have withheld from a secular caliph,[4] and had the Muslim state not been intrinsically sacred the Christians might perhaps have survived. But it also made the metropolitan church very loose: in northern Mesopotamia the ecclesiastical machinery reinforced a pre-existing moral continuity between elite and masses, but in Babylonia it had to create it – a task in which the aristocratic orientation of the church made success distinctly unlikely. Consequently, when the nobles all but unanimously decided to stick it as Christians,[5] their peasants left them to make it as Muslims; and the peasants having steadily left for Baṣra from the mid-Umayyad period onwards,[6] the 'Chaldean delta' had become solidly Muslim territory by the middle of the ninth century.[7]

The remaining Christian elite of the cities succumbed to Hagarene monotheism primarily via the Hellenising pluralism which the 'Abbāsid caliphs engendered, the phenomenon which in effect spelt doom to all the non-Muslim urban elites except the Jews. When the 'Abbāsid enlightenment lured the non-Muslims from their ghettoes to take part in an interconfessional discussion of truth conducted in the international language of philosophy at the court of Baghdad, the effect was unsurprisingly a renewed attack of the vertigo of relativity: on the one hand the rival truths were no longer insulated by physical segregation, and on the other they could no longer be kept apart by intellectual segregation. The common language deprived the traditional explanations of religious diversity of their old unthinking plausibility, with the new and unsettling consequence

that both the explanations and the truths were put in perspective and so ceased to be supreme. There were some who went Stoic, salvaging the religions as so many municipal signposts to the more elevated insights of conceptual philosophy: thus al-Fārābi,[8] the Brethren of Purity and other Ismā'ili circles,[9] or the tenth-century Syriac *Book of the Cause of Causes;*[10] equally there were some who went Epicurean, rejecting the religions as so many superstitions and intransigently adopting against them the supreme truths of philosophy: thus many *Zindīqs*,[11] *Dahrīs*,[12] al-Rāzī,[13] Ibn al-Rāwandī,[14] the Jew Hiwi of Balkh,[15] or the Chaldean Ibn Waḥshiyya.[16] But at all events religious pluralism wrought havoc with the gods, bringing cognitive Babel back where it belonged.[17]

It was evidently the non-Muslims who were going to be the losers in this search for a truth above the truths. The non-Muslims were on the defensive as the Muslims were not, and relativising their truths meant relativising their defences.[18] The Christians had an advantage over the Jews in that Christianity had long ago come to terms with conceptual philosophy, and those Christians who were brought to convert directly via philosphy were correspondingly few;[19] and they had an advantage over the pagan Chaldeans in that philosophy was not a vehicle of their identity, whence the greater ease with which they could share it with the Muslims. But in return they were weaker than either the Jews or the pagans in the ease with which they could shift their religious truth when the enlightenment had created a culture with secular appeal: as a Muslim in Baghdad 'Alī b. 'Īsā could study Greek philosophy and medicine, cultivate grammar, poetry and secretarial style, research into Ḥarrānian religion, dispute with the Jews, and retrieve what Christianity he had left in Muslim Ṣūfism.[20] The Christians having neither Zion nor Chaldea to keep them in a 'life apart', they disappeared as Muslim secretaries.[21]

The Jews and the pagans, on the other hand, were in the same boat to the extent that both had fused their truths with their identities,[22] and that both were represented by a learned laity. This meant that, unlike the Christians, they were not vulnerable to foreign conquest; and at first sight the two communities were equally well-placed to resist conversion. But there was of course a vital difference: the Jewish truth was a personal God, that of the pagans impersonal concepts. And this meant two things.

In the first place, the astrological cycles of the Chaldeans could generate neither ethnic unity, social solidarity, nor historical meaning. Ethnically the cycles were without a chosen people; socially they were intelligible only to the elite; and historically they could only explain, but not justify the present. The Jews could obey their God, mourn

their polity, and hope for their redemption; but the Chaldeans could only study inexorable revolutions. It is true of course that the astrological core of late paganism had undergone endless modifications in recognition of the fact that men are afflicted with sublunar emotions; on the one hand the Chaldeans mourned their polity and hoped that their turn would return,[23] and on the other they developed a certain concern for the masses.[24] But the fact remained that the stars could not articulate these emotions: their very point was to be above them, and so long as the stars remained the star-gazers could not coherently adopt a more terrestrial perspective. The masses, however, were unlikely to achieve such detachment; and if on the one hand the stars raised up a people that denied their influence,[25] and on the other this people made them the offer of solidarity and meaning through the cult of an ethnic God, small wonder that the masses obeyed the stars and converted.[26]

In the second place, the conceptual character of Chaldean paganism meant that its adherents could not share their truth without effacing their identity. Universal laws can be a peculiar truth only by copyright, not operation; and where one either became a Jew or expropriated the Jewish God, one could practise astrology with at the most a polite acknowledgement. Muslims could borrow Chaldean truths without running any risk of becoming Chaldeans; but Chaldeans who sold their truths sold also their identity, and this they could not do in a Muslim environment without running the risk of disappearing into it themselves.

So the pagan elite succumbed to Muslim pluralism as the pagan masses had succumbed to Muslim monotheism: when one could be a Muslim practising astrology, the pagans no longer had a truth with which to resist. The ninth-century exodus of Thābit b. Qurra and his likes from Ḥarrān[27] accordingly led on to the tenth-century conversion of Hilāl al-Ṣābi' in Baghdad;[28] while the tenth-century Ibn Waḥshiyya could only reassert a Shu'ūbī copyright.[29]

Only the Jews had an ethnic God: unlike the Christians they could afford to be sceptics and still retain their Judaic ethnicity, and unlike the Chaldeans they could afford to practise astrology and still retain their Judaic God.[30] The Jewish God did not of course go very well with concepts, and there were accordingly Jews who were brought to convert by means of them;[31] but most of them merely played around with the new conceptual toys. Sa'adya Gaon borrowed philosophy, obeyed his God and mourned his polity, where Ibn Waḥshiyya succumbed to a God and borrowed language from the Jews to mourn his.[32] The Jews of Babylon therefore survived to be ingathered in modern times by their secular redemption; but of the pagans, only the Mandeans survived into modern times to seek redemption in Marxist revolutions.[33]

Although Iraq thus became a predominantly Muslim country, its fate was still not an unrelenting Hagarisation. In the first place, the surviving Christians remained 'Syrians':[34] despite the early adoption of Arabic[35] and the ultimate disappearance of Syriac as a literary language,[36] Syriac survived as the liturgical language throughout the province and as a vernacular in the rural strongholds of the Assyrians;[37] similarly, despite the total ignorance to which the Nestorians had been reduced, they were in no doubt as to their own non-Arab identity. The coming of the Europeans thus meant the revival of the *Suryane*, and not as in Syria their final disappearance among the Arabs. Where the Christians of Syria were to turn down the label of Arabised Greeks, those of Iraq readily accepted identification as Chaldeans and Assyrians;[38] where the Christians of Syria were to lead the way in creating a modern Arab culture, those of northern Iraq adopted modern Syriac; and where the Christians of Syria were to provide the theorists of Arab nationalism, the Assyrians yearned once more for a polity in Ninive's fair city and Mosul's fertile plain.[39]

In the second place, the converts left an after-image: the image of Assyria projected onto an Arab screen in the case of the Christians, that of Babylon in its Chaldean form in the case of the pagans. The Assyrians had a polity where the metropolitan Christians were above polities, and it is therefore not surprising that only Assyria came through via the Christians. But at the same time the Assyrians shared their ethnicity[40] and the metropolitan Christians were above ethnicities, and it is therefore equally unsurprising that the Christians failed to make their mark ethnically or linguistically in Islam: on the one hand there was no Syrian Shu'ūbism,[41] and on the other there were no 'Syrian' Muslims.[42] But if the converts failed to retain their civilisation as *Suryane*, they could nevertheless do so as South Arabians; and the Arab Christians of Najrān having settled in Najrān of Kūfa to provide the pivot, 'an Arab from Dayr Qunnā' came to mean a spurious Yemeni.[43] The Christian converts thus became Arabs, but Arabs with a difference; and it was as part of this rather different Arab heritage that the Assyria of the converts[44] reappeared. The king of Hatra in northern Mesopotamia was accordingly either an Assyrian,[45] an Arab with an Assyrian title,[46] or simply a South Arabian;[47] and if he was quite correctly remembered to have defeated Septimius Severus[48] and to have been defeated in turn by Shāpūr,[49] he was also endowed with the more fanciful reputation of having conducted Sennacherib's expedition against Jerusalem in the days of Jeremiah.[50] Likewise the king of Ḥira in southern Mesopotamia was regarded as an Assyrian or South Arabian,[51] and if the dynasty of Ḥira was too well-known to acquire Biblical deeds, it could at least descend from Aḥiqar;[52] while Aḥiqar himself, though known in Christian Arabic, reappears in his Muslim guise as Luqmān the Wise.[53]

The Chaldean after-image, by contrast, reappeared in its own right. Having fused their truth with their identity, the Chaldeans were bound to resist Arabisation with all the resources of language, polity and culture at their disposal. Propaganda for Aramaic thus came primarily from a pagan background,[54] just as only the pagans produced Aramaic-speaking Muslims.[55] The fabulous kings of Babel, their priests of esoteric wisdom, their *literati* and their sages were mustered with a force which, the etiolation of the tradition nothwithstanding,[56] secured for Babylon an after-image in Islam second only to that of Iran.[57] But the Chaldean zeal was self-defeating: where other Shu'ūbīs banded together in a chorus of protests against the Arab identification of Islam, Ibn Waḥshiyya directed his hatred indiscriminately against all who threatened his Chaldean primacy, be they Arabs, Persians,[58] Greeks,[59] Assyrians[60] or even Syrians.[61] The Chaldeans having articulated their identity in terms of universal concepts, civilisation had to be Chaldean outright or to leave the Chaldeans alone.[62] But since the Chaldean concepts came in a cleaner version from Greece and Iran, they lost the copyright; and since they lived in lower Iraq, they could not be left alone; and so for all the initial vividness of their after-image, the Chaldeans lost their ethnicity in that of the Arabs as they had lost their truths in Islam.

The trajectories of the various communities of Iraq were thus far from identical: the differing relationships between their identities and their truths on the one hand, and the differing social embodiments of the various traditions on the other, made for very disparate capacities for resistance to Hagarisation. But these variations nevertheless conceal a certain overall homogeneity: all the Iraqi communities, whether Christian, Jewish or pagan, set out knowing perfectly well who they were, and none had any particular need of an Arab identity. The Jews apart, all were more or less overtaken by Hagarisation; but what overtook them was unambiguously their fate, not their destiny.

In contrast to the Iraqi experience, Hagarism was not the fate of Syria but its redemption. It is true, of course, that the blessing remained for some time in disguise. The Hagarenes were after all no Christians, and the Syrians no doubt had every intention of continuing as before. But although they may have felt at least as well-placed to survive as non-Arabs in the name of Christianity as they had been to survive as non-Greeks in the name of Monophysitism, the Syrians were in fact doomed.

The Syrians had survived in Christian Byzantium because Christianity is only a religion. It was at once the supreme metropolitan truth and the one truth that the metropolitans themselves had not invented; and as long as truth and identity were in this way conceptually distinct, the Syrians

could play one against the other. Conversely, it was because Christianity is only a religion, or in other words a truth which can be combined with any ethnicity and polity, that Christians could contrive to hang on in Muslim Syria:[63] the notions of Arab Jews, Arab Zoroastrians or Arab Berbers are at the very least problematic, but Arab Christians are a headache only to the Muslims. So where Abū 'Īsā al-Iṣfahānī, Bihāfarīd and Ḥā-mīm tried to save their ethnic and political identities by syncretic deals with the new Hagarene truth, it was as difficult for the Christians to revolt in the name of Christianity[64] as it was by the same token easy for them to accept the Arabs as their deliverers.[65] Yet it was also because Christianity is only a religion that the Syrians could not in the last resort survive when the distinction between the metropolitan truth and identity had ceased to exist. They could flog the Greeks with their barbarian doctrine, but against the Hagarenes they needed a worldly identity, preferably one fused with their truth; and this they did not possess. That Jesus was no Greek might embarrass the Hellenes, but he would have had to be a very committed Syrian for his ethnicity to make much impression on the Hagarenes; likewise it might impress the Hellenes that cultural inventiveness was not purely Greek, but the purely Christian Shu'ūbism of the Syrians contained nothing to dent the cultural pride of the Hagarenes.[66] The Arab Ghassānids could join in restoring a Syrian church as fellow-barbarians against the Greeks; but they were no Syrian barbarians against the Arabs, and if Jabala b. al-Ayham opted for a Christian exile in Byzantium,[67] most of his subjects appropriately made themselves at home as Hagarenes in Syria. Christians to God and barbarians to the Greeks, the Syrians would have needed a rather more consolidated identity against the Arabs.

Consequently, when the divine punishment was obviously going to last a good deal longer than the usual run of earthquakes, famines, droughts, locusts, plagues and invasions with which the Lord habitually chastiseth whom He loveth, the Syrians began to go soft. By the end of the eighth century the hopefully temporary chastisement for our Christian sins had become a presumably permanent punishment for the heresies of the Greeks;[68] and when in the thirteenth the Crusades threatened to bring back the Chalcedonians, it was firmly agreed that the conquests had left us all better off.[69] Arabic may have begun to make inroads on Syriac as a spoken language as early as the beginning of the eighth century;[70] by the tenth century it had become a Christian literary language,[71] by the eleventh Syriac had ceased to be spoken,[72] and by the fourteenth it had ceased to be written.[73] By this time the Jacobites had all but disappeared among the Arabs, and the Melkites had inherited the designation *Suryane*;[74] by the sixteenth century the Jacobites had all but disappeared in Islam,[75] and the Melkites went on to inherit their Ghassānid ancestors.[76] When the

European missionaries came to Syria, the remaining Christians were with few exceptions 'sons of the Arabs' by spoken, literary and liturgical language, by culture and by descent.[77] Paradise lost to the Greeks was Paradise regained with the Arabs: redeemed by Jesus the Messiah in the next world, it had taken 'Umar the Fārūq to redeem them in this.[78]

But if a small Christian minority continued to exist down the centuries, by far the majority of *Suryane* changed both identity and truth. Just as the separateness of metropolitan identity and truth had supplied both the motive and the mechanism for the survival of the Syrians vis-à-vis the Greeks, so now their fusion constituted both a lure and a stranglehold vis-à-vis the Hagarenes. On the one hand the Syrians could not survive in Islam any more than they could outside it: unlike the Iranians they possessed no secular identity, and if there are Persian Muslims there were never any Muslim *Suryane*. And on the other they had little incentive to attempt to survive in Islam, though they certainly tried to outside it: unlike the Iranians they had nothing to lose, and it takes vast erudition to find a Syrian Shu'ūbī.[79] At the same time, the exceptionally dispersed character of the Arab settlement in Syria meant that, if the Arabs were not going to be absorbed into the Syrians, the Syrians themselves were the more easily absorbed into the Arabs.

The conversion of Syria to Islam is therefore as totally lost in the Muslim sources as is the conversion of Syrian culture into Islamic. The chroniclers record neither an influx of peasants to the Arab cities on the Nestorian pattern nor massive peasant rebellions on the model of the Copts, and it takes Syriac sources to show that the Syrians had neither to be lured from the land nor crushed: the process started early[80] and proceeded relentlessly.[81] Nor do the chroniclers record any Syrian efforts to accommodate their civilisation in Islam: it takes Syriac sources to show that what civilisation they had they marshalled as Christians,[82] and what they marshalled as Muslims was neither Sanchuniathon, Julia Domna nor the Syrian saints but the glory of Kedar.[83] The Syrian messiah is not the king of Baalbek, but the Sufyānī who will restore Mu'āwiya's Syrian empire and who will come, God willing, before the end of times when we shall all be alive.[84] Equally Syrian culture was Arab, lizards and all: at the very time when the 'Abbāsid court was buying Greek philosophy from the Nestorians, the son of Theodosius, a wineseller from Damascus, adopted the name of Ḥabīb b. Aws al-Ṭā'ī to become a protagonist of the southern Arabs, a great anthologist and poet who would recite his *qaṣīdas* in bedouin garb before an unappreciative Ma'mūn.[85] Whether Christians or Muslims, the Syrians had finally found out who they were.

Once Syria had vanished from the hands of both Christians and Muslims, the effort to revive it could only prove ridiculous as Pharaonism

did not. Egypt stripped of its monotheist invaders could still be Kēme to the Copts; but Syria subjected to the same treatment was invisible except to the highly scientific eye of Anṭūn Sa'ādа.[86] Pharaonism went back to a real past, but Syria never had any pyramids against the whirlwinds in the south. Hence if the fate of the Syrian Muslims was to become pan-Arabists, the fate of the Christians could only be to beat the Muslims at Arabism as the Muslims had beaten them at it in the beginning. Islam purged of its monotheist accretions[87] thus became Arab culture to Jurjī Zaydān, Arab nationalism to Nejib Azoury, Arab socialism to Michel 'Aflaq, and Arab defence to George Ḥabash. The Copts and the Nestorians are Zionists who have lost their claim to the lands they once possessed;[88] but the Syrians have joined the Palestinians.

10

THE FATE OF ANTIQUITY: II. THE CULTURAL EXPROPRIATION OF THE FERTILE CRESCENT

Thanks to Judaic monotheism the Hagarenes who conquered Syria possessed both a truth and an identity; but the two did not amount to a civilisation. On the one hand neither contained any answers to the problems of settled life, and on the other the existence of such answers in the lands they had conquered made it impossible for the Hagarenes to take their time in evolving their own. Conversely, thanks to Hellenic pluralism, the Canaanites of seventh-century Syria had both a civilisation and a truth; but the two did not amount to an identity. On the one hand their truth was purely religious, and on the other the civilisation was not their own. The Arabs and the Syrians were thus uniquely able to be of assistance to each other. Had the Arabs conquered the province in the third century after Christ, the exodus of the Greek elite to the metropolis would hardly have left much culture for the conquerors to appropriate; and had they waited until the tenth century, the erosion of the Syrian identity would hardly have left much distance between the culture and the provincials. But as it was, the Hagarenes established their capital in a province where the combination of a Christian truth and an etiolated identity had worked a cultural alienation no less concrete than the combination of a Jewish truth and a barbarian identity among the Hagarenes themselves. The Syrians were precluded from accepting the traditions of the world they inhabited, just as the Hagarenes were precluded from appropriating them when they conquered it. Hence, if there was a certain general complementarity between the needs and resources of Hagarenes and provincials, it was in Syria that this complementarity was most pronounced. Syria was in effect full of ownerless cultural property; and while the Iraqis were certainly qualified to act as asset-strippers, it was the Syrian *évolués* to barbarism who actually needed to peddle Greek culture in return for an identity: they could nationalise civilisation only as Arabs. Conversely, the Arabs in electing to import Hellenism from the Syrians could escape the cultural clientage of the Nabatean *évolués* to civilisation: they acquired civilisation in the guise of an Arab product. The Arab *tour de force* was thus matched by an equally thorough-

going Syrian *tour de faiblesse*: whether described as the Syrian adoption of Arabia or the Arab expropriation of Syria, the fate of Syria was to disappear and its contribution was correspondingly crucial and elusive. It is as easy to appropriate ownerless cultural property as it is hard to trace its owners, and if the Syrian *mission civilisatrice* were to Hagarise its culture, the Hagarenes would duly appear to have created this culture themselves. It was precisely because Hagarene children had been taught by Christian priests in 'Abd al-Malik's Syria[1] that Mutawakkil could expel the Christian children from Muslim schools and the Christian priests from Muslim Sāmarrā.[2]

The Syrians were in other words uniquely qualified to elaborate a civilisation within the directives laid down by the Hagarene aegis. In the first place, they possessed no integral tradition which they could either transmit to their conquerors or suffer the loss of themselves. From the point of view of the tribal conquerors, the difference between the Ishmaelite and Israelite conquests of the land was that the cultural baalim of the Hellenised Canaanites no longer had the power to tempt; or to shift the imagery to what ought in its time to have been a second conquest of the land, if Jesus had of necessity renounced this world to a Roman emperor, then *a fortiori* the Hagarenes were under no converse temptation to renounce the next to Christian priests. So Syria having only a foreign emperor and a foreign church, the Hagarenes easily by-passed both to preserve their fusion of religion and politics in a Samaritan imamate. But although this was an essential move for the preservation of the Hagarene religion, it did not in itself preclude a certain *Fortleben* of Hellenic civilisation.[3] Had the Syrians felt that their civilisation was truly their own, they might accordingly have thrown in their lot with the Umayyad priests in an attempt to salvage a more integral legacy. Yet despite the occasional hint of such collaboration,[4] the emperor left few yearnings for a Roman order of society[5] just as the bishop left few yearnings for a Greek order of the universe. What the emperor, the elite and their philosophy unbared on their departure was thus a covenant, a nazirite ideal, and a scripture: the inadequate resources, in other words, of an implicit rejection of civilisation. The Canaanites had already in effect made an abortive shot at Hagarism,[6] but they lacked the tribes; so that when the tribes eventually arrived, it was Hagarism and not Hellenism which represented temptation.[7]

In the second place, the Syrians at last had an integral identity to gain. The case of Abū Tammām was in this respect paradigmatic: as the son of Theodosius he could at best imitate the Greeks, but as the son of Aws he might emulate and even surpass them. Just as it was in Syria that Mu'āwiya collected the *Mu'allaqāt*,[8] so it was the Syrian Abū Tammām who glorified the Arab past with its heroic climax at Dhū Qār.[9] As a Christian Anthony

of Takrīt had to quote Homer and Plutarch as well as Ephraim to prove the superiority of Syriac, and so he had to admit the superiority of Greek;[10] but as Muslims with their conceptually fused *Jāhiliyya*, polity and scripture, Buḥturī, Maymūn b. Mihrān and the Banū 'l-Muhājir were freed of imported poets, parallel lives and translated scriptures alike. Buḥturī could thus write Arabic poetry for an Arab caliph,[11] just as Maymūn b. Mihrān could serve one, teach his children and record his deeds,[12] and Ibn Abī'l-Muhājir could serve one, teach his children, and specialise in scripture,[13] within the reassuringly unitary framework of the same Arab inimitability. Plots of Hellenistic dramas, themes of Hellenistic novels, bits and pieces of Greek thought[14] and odds and ends of Roman law[15] were all torn from their original contexts to provide materials for an Arab edifice. In all cases the Arabs supplied the structures, and the Syrians gratefully obliged with their bricks.

This self-effacing character of the Syrian role meant two things. First, it made it possible for the barbarians to set their own cultural tone. Where the Romans exposed to the Greek tradition could only present their *Jāhiliyya* in the form of a Homeric epic, and the Manchus in Confucian China could only turn theirs into essay questions for state examinations, the Hagarenes were under no such compulsion to restate their identity in the cultural language of their subjects. Had the Syrians by the seventh century become as zealously Greek as the Celtiberians had become Romans, Mu'āwiya might have demanded the collection of the *Mu'allaqāt* in the form of an Arab Iliad; but whatever the ultimate status of pre-Islamic poetry, its transmitters were no epigoni of Homer. Conversely, had the Arab capital been located in Iraq, 'Alī might have ordered an edition of the Arab past on the model of that of the Iranians; but whatever the role of Ḥammād al-Rāwiya[16] in the transmission and forging of tribal poetry, he was no precursor of Firdawsī. Consequently the Arabs were in a position to encash their *Jāhiliyya* as a peculiarly distinctive culture. Secondly, Syrian self-effacement meant that Syria could act as a filter, not only of the Greek tradition in Syria itself, but also of other traditions, Greek or non-Greek, which had already been filtered through a provincial environment elsewhere. Thus Iranian statecraft reached them only in the provincial version of 'Abd al-Ḥamīd b. Yaḥyā, probably a Christian from Anbār, who seems likewise to have combined the epistolary style of the provincials of Byzantine Syria with that of the provincials of Sasanian Iraq, thereby creating the peculiar Arab blend which ultimately set the tone of the Muslim chancery.[17] In Syria the Hagarenes had neither Byzantine court histories nor Sasanian royal annals to cope with: just as Syriac sheltered them from Procopius, so they got their Iranian history via South Arabia, from men such as 'Ubayd b. Shāriya, a Yemeni who

presumably drew his knowledge from the local Iranians. It was similarly in the Yemen that the Iranian Wahb b. Munabbih acquired the Jewish lore which he transmitted to the Hagarenes of Syria, just as it was the Yemeni Awzā'ī who presented them with a Judaic law.[18] In this way the Hagarenes could undergo an exposure to etiolated versions in Damascus before they had to face the more integral traditions in Iraq. The Syrians Hagarised not only themselves and the culture they had known before the conquest, but also whatever culture was subsequently brought to their province

There were only two exceptions to this general readiness of the Syrians to peddle such culture as came their way as so many spare parts. First, they did possess one treasure of their own in the shape of the nazirite; and the Syrian ascetic unsurprisingly came through not only in his integrity, but also early, in the shape of Abū Dharr, Abū 'l-Dardā' and their likes,[19] who were in time to develop into Ṣūfī saints. Secondly, they did have a sufficiently integrated theological tradition for Christian concepts to reemerge in Muslim guise, sparingly in the Ghaylāniyya[20] and more full-bloodedly in the Qadariyya;[21] and if Syria had remained the capital it might have played a greater role in the transmission of Greek philosophy than it actually did.[22]

To some extent, however, these two contributions were themselves mutually exclusive. There is of course no intrinsic incompatability between Ṣūfism and theology, and in so far as Ṣūfism may be defined as Christianity stripped of its ecclesiastical organisation, there was nothing to prevent theologians and mystics being off-shoots of the same Greek philosophy; and so indeed they were in Iraq. But although the Syrian theologians inherited something of the concepts of the Hellenised church, the Syrian Ṣūfī perpetuated the rival values of the nazirite. And since the Syrians were prepared to relinquish the cities to Muslim rabbis if the latter in turn would make over the 'people of the land' to Muslim nazirites, it was in its nazirite asceticism rather than its theological concepts that Syria lived on. Just as Greek philosophy in Islam was a *Fortleben* of Nestorian, not Jacobite Christianity,[23] so also the Greek heritage in Ṣūfism derives from Iraq, not Syria.[24] One is an Iraqi by culture and a Syrian by asceticism, as the Brethren of Purity have it,[25] and it is therefore not inappropriate that the Syrians received their Greek philosophy through Baghdad.[26] The nazirite 'Āmir b. 'Abd Qays who was exiled from Baṣra might find a more congenial environment in Mu'āwiya's Syria,[27] but the Qadarīs who disappeared from Syria found a more congenial environment in Mu'tazilite Baṣra.[28] Abū 'l-Dardā' shed recognisably Christian tears,[29] and the 'Udhrī tribesmen were afflicted with Hagarised Platonic love;[30] but the perpetuation of the Greek heritage as such could not be the work of the

Syrians. The ecclesiastical and monastic integument of Hellenism having burst, neither the Syrians nor the Arabs had any interest in saving its contents intact; and the transmission, as opposed to pulverisation, of the Hellenic tradition was therefore bound to be an overwhelmingly Iraqi contribution.

Iraq was a province of much richer cultural resources than Syria, but it was also a province in which neither the etiolation of identity nor the homogenisation of truth had proceeded quite so far. Had the Hagarene conquerors chosen to locate their capital in 'Alī's Kūfa rather than in Mu'āwiya's Damascus, their chances of creating a new civilisation would therefore have been very much less. In the first place, Iraqi culture had very definite owners, and the inevitable cultural clientage might easily have developed into cultural acceptance: it would have taken a good deal of priestly nerve to present such integral traditions as inherently Hagarene, and even as it was, the rabbis failed to pulverise them completely.[31] In the second place, Iraq had two incompatible heritages, the Judaic and the Indo-European. The Judaic heritage was filtered primarily through Kūfa, which accordingly specialised in law, bred imamic heresies, and saw a resurgence of messianism with Mukhtār; the Indo-European heritage was filtered primarily through Baṣra, which thus specialised in grammar and philology, bred Mu'tazilism, and saw a reemergence of Persian ideas of kingship on the one hand,[32] and of Persian, Greek and Indian religion in the guise of *Zandaqa*[33] and Ṣūfism on the other. Hence even if the Hagarenes had proved able to withstand the strains of the cultural clientage, they could hardly have avoided those of the cultural conflict—as indeed they did not when Kūfa and Baṣra eventually came together in Baghdad. And had the drama of Ibn Ḥanbal and Ma'mūn been enacted after the second rather than the fourth civil war, the embryonic religious identity of the conquerors might well have disintegrated altogether, leaving the Hagarenes to disappear sooner or later as Jews and Christians. Even as it was, the conflict was to leave a disharmony which became a permanent feature of Islam. The outcome of the first civil war was thus of major cultural significance: it was because a nazirite Syria sheltered the Hagarenes from the metropolitan tradition in their own metropolis that they avoided the cultural clientage, and because a Christian Syria presented only one truth that they evaded the cultural conflict. For a century the Hagarenes thus received their culture, Iraqi and other, in small doses at the hands of the Syrians; and since they used the shelter this provided to entrench their own religious identity, the issue in 'Abbāsid Iraq was no longer the fate of Hagarism, but that of civilisation.

The effect of the 'Abbāsid promotion of Iraq to metropolitan status was

thus the outbreak of a greatly increased level of cultural conflict among a much more distinctive set of cultural protagonists: the pluralistic situation, in other words, that was to wreak such havoc with the religious allegiances of the non-Muslim elites. The interconfessional rumpus over the status of oral tradition is in this respect paradigmatic: 'Anan b. David and Abū Ḥanīfa discussing law in the caliph's prison[34] are matched by Theodore Abū Qurra and the doctors discussing religion at the caliph's court[35] and by the Shu'ūbīs discussing culture with the caliph's vizier.[36] But at the same time these proceedings took place within very definite constraints. On the one hand there was now a limit to the liberty that could be taken with the Judaic heritage: there could thus no longer be any doubt that Islam had to find its religious embodiment as a revealed, all-embracing law of a Judaic type, and the 'Abbāsids accordingly gave recognition to the rabbis instead of attempting to codify an imperial law.[37] But on the other hand there was also a limit beyond which they could not attempt to dispense with the Indo-European heritage: there could not thus as yet be much doubt that Islam had to find its political embodiment in a unitary empire of a Persian type, and the 'Abbāsids therefore borrowed Sasanian court etiquette instead of withdrawing into the ghetto. But if these two basic constraints could be taken as given, their mutual incompatibility meant that their consequences could not. And the crux of the matter lay in the ambiguous position of the Muslim rabbis as rabbis by conquest. Having left the ghetto, they could not simply reject the one heritage for the other in the manner of the Jews; but having done so as conquerors rather than missionaries, they could not simply conflate the two in the manner of the Christians. Instead, they were placed with the dispositions of rabbis in an environment in which a mass of foreign material was pressing for cultural acceptance, and some of it they had to accept if only to give substance to their own parvenu tradition.

We may begin with the most successful case of rabbinical assimilation, the fate of Roman law. A legal order may for our purposes be thought of in terms of a pyramid: the most abstract definition of the order corresponds to the apex, the mass of details and particulars to the base, while in the middle we have a layer at once less elevated and less particular in which the characteristic structures and procedures of the order are lodged. Roman law thus consisted, in descending order, of a category of 'civil law', a science of jurisprudence, and a mass of substantive law. Now if the Muslim rabbis were neither to accept nor reject the pyramid as a whole, they had to dismantle it; and for this operation it was the middle of the pyramid that was crucial. For if the rabbis could knock out the Roman middle and replace it with a jurisprudential theory of their own, it became

possible for them to transform civil into holy law: on the one hand they could substitute the will of God for the category of civil law at the apex; and on the other they could reshape the substantive law at the base to present it as the elaboration of the will of their God and the peculiar treasure of their nation.[38]

In effecting this transformation the Muslim rabbis were greatly assisted by two circumstances. In the first place, the Arabs acquired their paradigm from the Jews at an early stage: by the time Abū Ḥanīfa and 'Anan are alleged to have met in the caliph's prison, the Hagarenes were already approaching the end of their religious clientage to the Jews. In the second place, the foreign pyramid was unusually brittle: for unlike the law of Syria, that of Nestorian Iraq had been politically divorced from its Roman matrix. The result was that Roman jurisprudence virtually disappeared. The Nestorians accepted the civil law of Roman emperors because they were Christians, and obeyed the public law of Persian emperors because they were their subjects; but the only theory of law that could engage their conceptual interest was a theory of Christian law. Jurisprudence thus tended to be reduced to Christian principles, while civil law slid towards canon law and public law became an acceptance of the executive justice of the state. Put one way, this meant that the Nestorians in their Persian ghetto had come as close as the heirs of Pauline antinomianism could do to a rabbinic law; put another way, it meant that the relationship between the apex and the base of the legal pyramid had become shaky in the extreme. At the same time the divorce of Nestorian law from the Roman polity affected the character of the base itself. The substantive law of the Nestorians was losing its Roman stamp, partly through the long-standing transfer to canon law, and partly through the continuing adulteration of civil law with Persian practice. In sum, where the Roman law of Syria had retained an integral and hence resistant shape, in the Nestorian case it was relatively easy for the Muslims to insert their own paradigm in the middle and to pulverise a substantive law which had already been softened up at the base.[39] There thus emerged the characteristic shape of Islamic law: the will of God at the apex, mediated through a jurisprudential theory revolving around the notion of a Prophetic law, and issuing at the base in a welter of materials from the earlier legal systems of the Middle East ground down into an unstructured mass of overwhelmingly Prophetic traditions. There was nothing in the operation to prevent the resurfacing of a fair amount of Roman law; but the category itself was stopped dead at the frontier. In the word *qānūn* the civil law of the Romans stood condemned as foreign profanity; and the point was underlined by projecting the origins of Islamic law into inner Arabia.[40]

The Greek tradition was altogether less amenable than the Roman to this kind of treatment. The concepts of philosophy could not be pulverised because their very essence was their structure. But equally concepts as such are necessarily suspect to rabbis: epistemologically because they are impersonal, socially because they are elitist, and ethnically because they are foreign. To this extent, of course, the situation of Greek philosophy was no different from that of Roman jurisprudence. But in the first place, the Greek tradition had a very different centre of gravity. Jurisprudence cannot aspire to be more than the handmaiden of substantive law; but in a Greek context substantive science was unmistakably subordinate to philosophy. So the rabbis could not conceivably have knocked out or reshaped the middle to appropriate the pyramid: to have done so would simply have destroyed it. And in the second place, even had it been possible for them to knock out the middle, their Judaic heritage could not and did not provide a replacement. There was at least an implicit Judaic theory of the nature of law, but the Judaic theory of the nature of nature was simply a monotheism which deleted the category altogether. So the rabbis had either to grasp the conceptual nettle or thrust it from them: to combine their scripture with philosophy to generate a conceptual theology in which God and concepts were conflated, or to set their scripture against philosophy in the hope of destroying it outright. And since they could not take it, they rejected it.

But if the point of the Greek pyramid had of necessity to be lost on the rabbis, there remained the possibility of salvaging the substantive science at its base. For if the operations of the divine will in matters of law were amenable to monotheist jurisprudence, there was no reason in principle why its operations in matters of matter should not prove amenable to monotheist science. Between a Hellenic assertion of natural law which sent God into causal occlusion, and a Judaic assertion of God's will which reduced causality to the vagaries of his moods, there remained a certain middle ground: one could reasonably ask of the deity that he should form a set of dependable habits, a '*sunna* of God' in the happy phrase of the Koran. The Muslims could thus honour their Judaic heritage by keeping their universe as empty of natural law as their polity was of civil law; but equally, they could escape the derangement of a thoroughgoing voluntarism by transforming the pagan medicine of the Greeks into the Prophetic medicine of Islam.[41]

But the attempt was a failure, and this for two obvious reasons. In the first place, there was no available Judaic paradigm – which left the Muslims with the added onus of having to invent it for themselves. In the second place, the link between philosophy and substantive science was too close for comfort. Had the Muslims excavated the dogged empiricism of

the Hippocratic tradition by clearing away the subsequent accretions of pneumatic theory, they would have found themselves with a mass of particulars easy to reassemble under the aegis of the *sunna* of God; but it was in seventeenth-century Europe, not ninth-century Islam, that this excavation was effected, and the link between medicine and its philosophical metatheory was thus to all appearances intrinsic. And what was true of medicine was true *a fortiori* of astrology: if the Muslims could not isolate Hippocrates, still less could they extricate the empirical data of the cuneiform tablets from the pervasive theoretical interpretations of the Greeks.

Because the Greek tradition could not be processed epistemologically, it was equally impossible to present it in a manner that was ethnically inoffensive. Its ethnicity could of course be played down. Concepts are by nature cosmopolitan, and history had done much to bring this out: shorn of its polity by the Macedonians, of its gods by the Jews, and of its language by the Syrian translators, the philosophical tradition had been as effectively extricated from its Greek matrix as had Nestorian law from its Roman equivalent. Greek philosophy, as Jāḥiẓ aptly insisted, was neither Roman nor Christian;[42] and it is to this extent appropriate that we have in Bīrūnī a Muslim Chorasmian who puts forward a Stoicising defence of Indian idolatry.[43] But if the fact that concepts are above the particular made it easy for them to travel, it also made them hard to nationalise. If philosophy was in principle 'common to all nations and sects',[44] there was by the same token nothing to make it peculiarly Arab – which was the old Syrian dilemma.[45] At most one might attempt to assert an author's copyright – which was the old Chaldean dilemma. But while a fifteenth-century Greek nationalist like Plethon could make this move on his home ground,[46] it would have taken considerable nerve to set out similar claims on behalf of the Arabs. There is one rather suggestive intimation of such a tactic: Fārābī's theory that philosophy originated in Mesopotamia[47] had the effect of conferring on it the status of a sort of 'philosophy of Abraham'. But the ethnic detour of philosophy could then hardly have been said to have terminated with Muḥammad, and the tactic of ethnic appropriation stood no real chance of success. And if philosophy could not be Arab, that left it as not so much ethnically neutral as straightforwardly alien. Philosophy was accordingly pilloried as a tradition so outlandish that the names of its greatest men were unpronounceable gibberish on the tongues of the true believers;[48] and conversely, it could expect none of the tolerance which the poetry of pagan Arabia, for all its irreligious fatalism, could call upon because it was Arab.[49]

The rabbinic rejection of philosophy was thus both epistemological and ethnic. Its results are not far to seek: they can be subtly detected in the

differing syncretic gradients faced by the sixth-century Christian Philoponus and the ninth-century Muslim Kindī in their attempts to give philosophical explications of religious dogma;[50] or they can be crudely parodied in the pronouncement of a Sunnī jurist of the thirteenth century that Islam had, thank God, no need of logic whatever, and that philosophers should accordingly be offered the choice of Islam or the sword.[51] And if the consolidation of Islamic values did not in practice eliminate Hellenism in quite so dramatic a fashion, its enemies did at the level of principle make a drastic attempt to kill both physics and metaphysics by resorting to the Greek tradition itself: the atoms of Democritus are exactly sands upon the Red sea shore in the doctrine of Islamic occasionalism.[52] The idea of a Christian philosophy may perhaps be considered fruitfully problematic; but the notion of an Islamic philosophy, as the Ottoman rabbis of the nineteenth century rightly observed, is a contradiction in terms.[53] Against the discouraging background of this persistent religious hostility, the history of Islamic philosophy was long and not unimpressive. But if the erosion of its status was slow, it was also relentless. The sciences of the ancients were progressively reduced to a sort of intellectual pornography, and the elite which had cultivated them to a harrassed and disreputable subculture.[54] The Hellenistic Carthaginian Hasdrubal may have found no place for philosophy in his own country, but he could at least leave it for academic respectability in Athens;[55] but when Ḥayy b. Yaqẓān found himself similarly out of place in Islam, his only course was to return to his desert island.[56]

The fates of Roman law and Greek philosophy were thus in the last resort symmetrical. In the case of law the conceptual shape was successfully removed, so that the formless mass of details could be repackaged as indigenous products through attribution to the Prophet or to a normative tribal past; in the case of philosophy the concepts refused to go, with the result that the entire pyramid failed to change its cultural identity in transit and retained the stamp of its origin by way of stigma. The philosophy of antiquity stood condemned as *falsafa* just as its law stood condemned as *qānūn*; but unlike substantive law, substantive medicine never acquired any sanctity. Roman law was denatured, while Greek philosophy failed to be naturalised; but either way their fates were unhappy.

The culture of the Shu'ūbīs at the caliph's vizier's was overwhelmingly, though not exclusively, Persian. Their central value was a political paradigm which we can again present in pyramid form: a notion of dynastic kingship at the apex, an aristocratic order of society in the middle, and a science of statecraft at the base. Here, of course, we have relatively little to do with abstract and cosmopolititan concepts: the Persian order of

society represented a metropolitan tradition too intimately linked with its ethnic and religious matrix to have stood in much need of theoretical articulation. The link was not of course indissoluble: as the Persian Mazdak had been able to reject the Iranian social order in the name of Zoroaster, so likewise the Aramean Christians had been able to accept it in the name of Christ. The Nestorians could not do for the Iranian tradition what they had done for the Roman; but the tradition which the Arabs encountered in Iraq was at least in principle capable of being desanctified and deethnicised. In principle, then, it might have been possible for the barbarian conquerors to accept the Iranian heritage on the ground that, though not intrinsically Islamic, it represented civilisation in a form not incompatible with Islam. But in practice, the Hagarene fusion of truth and identity meant that Persian culture would be rejected on the ground that it was not Arab, just as the Arab past would be sanctified even when manifestly not Islamic.

The reaction of the gentile Muslims took the form of a desperate series of attempts to extricate Islam from its Arab integument. Khārijism was one of the earliest religious expedients to be used in this way; but though Khārijism could be employed to desanctify the Arab ethnicity, it was hardly a suitable vehicle for the sanctification of civilisation.[57] Accordingly it gave way to *Zandaqa*, a Muslim Manichaeism which attempted to desanctify both the Persian and Arab ethnicities to combine the culture of the one with the religion of the other; but inasmuch as Manichaeism was formally hostile to both matter and monotheism, its chances of success in this venture were slight. So as the trickle of converts turned into a flood, Manichaeism in turn gave way to Shu'ūbism, the movement of gentile Muslims which sought legitimation for their civilisation by arguing without recourse to heresy that Islam had been gentile from the very beginning.[58] The uniform pressure of Arab Islam on gentile civilisation thus generated men who for all the variety of their religious tactics shared the same cultural strategy. We have the Khārijite Abū 'Ubayda, who formally committed himself to a puritan ideal of political power in order to advocate a Persian ideal of crowned authority;[59] the Manichean Ibn al-Muqaffa', an Iranian noble for whom civilisation was of immense antiquity,[60] and who as a client to the Arabs set out to educate his barbarian masters to be its guardians, teaching them table manners, turning their language into a sophisticated vehicle of literary expression, volunteering a programme for transforming their religion into a pliant imperial creed,[61] only to meet his death under torture at the age of thirty-six;[62] or the Shu'ūbīs at large who, cornered by an intransigent religion, desperately pointed out that, for God's sake, all civilisation *was* gentile, be it the Pharaohs, the Nimrodids, the Caesars or the Shahanshahs, the

poets, the philosophers or the prophets before Muḥammad, all of whom the gentiles had produced in the course of building the civilisations of mankind while the Arabs were still eating lizards in their desert.[63] Whether we take our stand on the Khārijite piety of Abū 'Ubayda, the aristocratic dignity of Ibn al-Muqaffa', or the sneers, the boasting, the ridicule and the abuse of the Shu'ūbī chorus, the substance of the message was the same: Islam was a religion for all nations.[64] Only the Hagarene fusion of religious meaning with the violent force of the conquests doomed this gigantic effort to failure: if Islam is no longer quite an Arab religion, the very intensity of Shu'ūbī emotions, the prolonged duration of their struggle, and the abusive connotations of the term *shu'ūbiyya* in modern times, show clearly enough that the Shu'ūbīs were not the heroes of Islam but its victims.[65]

It was therefore not enough that Persian culture was not incompatible with Islam: it had to be made intrinsically Islamic. And since this was a feat which only the esoteric wisdom of priests could perform, and which the 'Abbāsids in fact failed to accomplish, the residual fate of the Persian tradition was left in the hands of the rabbis. To the rabbis the tradition was suspect on two counts. In the first place it could never become intrinsically Arab. To some extent, however, this alienness was offset by the fact that in due course the Persians became Muslims; and the ethnic tag of the Persian legacy thus lost much of the stigma retained by that of the Greeks. To this extent it became possible to acknowledge the Persian origin of minor items in Islamic civilisation without undue embarrassment.[66] But in the second place the Persian legacy was incompatible, not perhaps with Islam as such, but certainly with Islam in its rabbinic form. The rabbinical analogue to the Persian pyramid could only consist of God, an unstructured laity, and a revealed law. The King of Kings thus usurped the place of the Muslim God; and though the priests could adopt the substance of the royal tradition without its name as intrinsically Muslim, the rabbis could only reject it as inherently ungodly.[67] Similarly there was no way in which the rabbis could be brought to accept an aristocratic order of society which threatened the direct relationship between God and the individual believer; the only aristocratic category the rabbis could legitimate was descent from the Arabian Prophet. Finally there was no paradigm the rabbis could insert to salvage the base of the pyramid: as a purely religious nobility the descendants of the Prophet could no more become the bearers of a pulverised Iranian statecraft than a purely religious law could contain the detritus of a splintered empire. The result was accordingly a variant on the legacy of the Greeks: the whole pyramid came in and survived, battered and mauled, but neither denatured nor naturalised.[68]

The variation arises from the fact that whereas philosophy could

eke out a more or lesss tenuous existence between Muslim rabbis and Turkish *mamlūk*s as long as there were Muslim secretaries, the low degree of theoretical articulation characteristic of the aristocratic idea meant that it could scarcely survive the physical disappearance of the aristocratic houses. Dādūya al-Mubārak lost his aristocratic rank to become a mere fiscal instrument whom Ḥajjāj could freely cripple; the son of the cripple, Ibn al-Muqaffa', could still nurse his aristocratic ideals as a mere secretary whom the caliph could freely execute. But the grandson of the cripple, who survived unscathed to die a natural death, left neither aristocratic heirs nor aristocratic ideals behind: he consoled himself instead with the eternal truths of Greek philosophy which he translated for the 'Abbāsid court.[69] Hence, where the rabbis had to fight an unending, if patently winning battle against Greek philosophy, the middle of the Iranian pyramid simply caved in for good. Without a middle of their own to provide the paradigm, the rabbis could not denature and so naturalise Iranian statecraft as they had Roman law; but equally, without its crucial middle, the Iranian pyramid could at least be tolerated as the Greek could not. We thus have the remains of the Persian order of society in its Sunnī rehashing as God, kings and statecraft, which simply coexisted with the Sunnī order of God, laity and holy law, without being either legitimated or greatly resisted. The dynastic legitimation of the Persian kings having been broken by a wilful God to produce an occasionalist politics,[70] the kings could remain with a certain instrumental legitimacy, just as their science could hang on as a profane armoury of statecraft.

In so far as Islamic civilisation may be defined as what was left after antiquity had been ground through a rabbinic mill, there could only be two significant exceptions to the general reduction of the alternatives to pulverisation or rejection. Both mysticism and art lay all but completely outside the rabbinic domain of definition, and both could therefore be left to develop relatively undisturbed by the struggle between 'Abbāsid priests and Babylonian rabbis.

Mysticism was of course suspect to the rabbis to the extent that its practice was directed towards bridging the gap between man and God; and it was anathema to them to the extent that its theory replaced the excised mystery of Christianity with the imported monism of India.[71] But in the first place, though potentially rivals, the mystic and legal approaches to God tended to be complementary rather than mutually exclusive; and so long as the mystics refrained from flaunting an unreserved monism in public, the Muslim rabbis could simply coexist with them in the manner of their Jewish peers. In the second place, the potential rivals came to need each other in Islam. Had the Muslims lived out their

legalistic piety in an epistemological ghetto, it is quite possible that the coexistence would have remained as uneasy as it was in the days of Abū Yazīd al-Biṣṭāmī or the notorious Ḥallāj. But as it happened the rabbis were threatened by the impersonal laws and categories of Greek philosophy to the point where they had themselves to employ impersonal concepts to defend the personal will of their God; and as the concepts pushed the God into extreme otherworldly distance without establishing regular this-worldly laws, it was the mystic pursuit of the face of God rather than the empirical study of his acts which suggested itself as a complement to the pious reading of his words. Ṣūfism and its contents did not therefore elicit an automatic rabbinical rejection. But equally, because Ṣūfism developed outside the rabbinic domain of definition, it did not need to resort to the same systematic pulverisation of the elements that went into it. The Ṣūfis did not go so far as to give unembarrassed acknowledgement of their dependence on foreign sources in the manner of the 'Christian philosophers' of Nestorian Iraq; and conversely they did retroject some of their borrowings into Arabia.[72] But on the whole, Ṣūfism represents a case of genuine Islamic syncretism.

Art, unlike Ṣūfism, was merely a practice. On the one hand it had ceased to be in any organic relationship with theory: the Greek concepts of aesthetics had long been the concern of philosophers rather than artists. And on the other it was in no positive relationship with the Judaic God: the aesthetic content of monotheism reduced to the prohibition of graven images. So after the Umayyads had exercised their priestly discretion in this matter by filling their summer palaces, and indeed the Dome of the Rock, with a wealth of very pleasant images, the rabbis did in fact step in to pulverise art by enforcing the monotheist prohibition; and to this extent the Greek scroll reduced to the arabesque is the precise equivalent of Roman law reduced to Prophetic traditions. But beyond this point the analogy does not apply: the prohibition of graven images was no paradigm for a Prophetic art; and once it had been enforced against the artists, the domain of art no more interested the rabbis than it threatened them. Art in Islam thus remained a mere craft, the work of architects, decorators and ornamenters. And because there is no Muslim theory of art, no *uṣūl* of the arabesque, neither the arabesque nor other artistic forms had to be repackaged as indigenous Arab products.[73] There was accordingly nothing to prevent a cross-breeding of foreign artistic forms, anymore than there was anything to prevent the cross-breeding of foreign plants, in the Muslim world; and to this extent art, like mysticism, escaped the alternatives of pulverisation or rejection.

Yet the negative force of all these cases remains the same: Islam could

naturalise only by denaturing. Whether the foreign goods were accepted or rejected, the Muslims acknowledged only one legitimate source of their cultural and religious ideals: the Arabia of their Prophet. For barbarians who had conquered the most ancient and venerable centres of human civilisation, this is a *tour de force* without parallel in history; but by the same token the fate of civilisation in Islam could only be an exceptionally unhappy one. In the last resort it was the fusion of Judaic meaning with the force of Arab conquest on the one hand, and the extreme cultural alienation of the Syrians on the other, that determined both why and what Islamic civilisation had to be. Unlike the Arian Goths, the Hagarenes were not destined to disappear into the culture they had conquered. And yet as conquerors they could not sustain the concrete character of their 'life apart' in either the desert or the ghetto. The outcome was a new civilisation. But just as Gothic Arianism was not enough, so also Hagarism was too much. Hagarism had been built to keep its distance from the Canaanite culture it had conquered; and the distance that had served initially to prevent the absorption of Hagarism into civilisation was still there to obstruct the absorption of civilisation into Hagarism. Equally, just as plural Iraq was too much, so also nazirite Syria was too little. The Syrians had distanced themselves from the Canaanite culture they inhabited; and the distance which had served initially to prevent the absorption of the Syrians into Hellenism went to reinforce the intransigence of Hagarism.

Enkidu had once been seduced by a temple prostitute to quite his wilderness for civilisation; and for all its costs, the civilisation of Sumeria had been worth it. It was to that extent right and proper that the exodus of Nabonidus to Yathrib was at best a cultural idiosyncracy,[74] and it would have been an appropriate corollary had Marwān II spent his time in Ḥarrān in the study of ancient wisdom. But by the seventh century after Christ the temples had been denuded of their prostitutes: it was monotheism that seduced the Arabs into leaving their wilderness, and the civilisation of Syria had lost its power to tempt. Instead the Arab exodus from the desert in the name of a Hagarised Judaism intersected with the Syrian attempt to retrieve one in a gentile Judaism. The result was a civilisation; but it was a civilisation haunted by the desert and the ghetto. In so far as the Arabs were haunted by the ghetto, they were, like the Jews and the pagans, the mourners of a lost past. But where the Jews mourned their Zion and the pagans their Chaldea, the Arabs by the waters of Babylon were the mourners of a wilderness.

II

THE FATE OF ANTIQUITY: III. THE INTRANSIGENCE OF ISLAMIC CIVILISATION

Islamic civilisation in the Fertile Crescent was the outcome of the interaction between the conquerors and the conquered. Elsewhere, by contrast, the new civilisation was itself one of the parties to the interaction. The bargains which the Syrians and the Iraqis struck with an intransigent religion created a civilisation which was in some measure a product of their particular cultural needs. But the rest had to come to terms, not just with an intransigent religion, but with an intransigent civilisation in the shaping of which they played no part. And in these harsher conditions they understandably contributed less and suffered more.

The most dramatic instance of the latter is the fate of the Iranian tradition in its ethnic homeland. Iran had been everything that Syria was not, and it takes little imagination to see that what was a blessing in disguise for the one was an undisguised misfortune for the other. Where Syria was a province, Iran was an empire; where Syria lacked an identity to the point of standing in need of tribal conquerors, the Iranians had an ethnicity fused with a truth in the experience of resisting tribal incursion; where the Syrians could come to see the Arabs as redeemers, the Iranians could perceive only a returning Turan with an alien God; where the Syrians could rebuild their ruin of bricks as an Arab edifice, the Iranian edifice was carved from a single rock and could only be taken or left. The Muslims of course could neither take it nor leave it; but just as they failed to reduce the Palace of Khusraw to bricks for an impeccably Muslim building,[1] so also they failed to reduce Persia to an impeccably Muslim country.

The magnitude of the catastrophe which hit Iran can be set out against the more subtle background of Greece and India, which like Iran represented metropolitan traditions, and to which Iran was itself related. The Indians possessed a tradition in which a plurality of indigenous elements coexisted without integration;[2] while the Greek evolution had issued in a tradition in which a plurality of heterogeneous elements coexisted in historically shallow integration. So that if India may be compared to profuse carvings up and down a single rock, Byzantium was by contrast a single edifice built with a diversity of bricks. When subject to Islamic

conquest, the Indians and the Greeks were thus in something of the same boat as against the Iranians: on the one hand, their traditions were less likely than that of Iran to reemerge as integral identities within Islam; while on the other, individual elements of their traditions stood a better chance of piecemeal absorption or accommodation.

At the same time, this difference between the traditions was powerfully reinforced by the differing tempo of conquest. Where Iran was conquered in its entirety in the seventh century, the Greeks and the Indians escaped this fate until much later. The Greeks of the Byzantine territories which went down to the Arab invaders were a thin stratum of the population; the Indians of Sind may have been denser, but it was a small and outlying province. Even the more thorough-going conquests of the Turks left unconquered Byzantine and Hindu states into the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries. And because these traditions survived for so long outside Islam, there was correspondingly less pressure on them to resurface in an integral form within it.

It was thus possible for Islam in the lands of the Greeks and Indians to tolerate popular religion while absorbing elite concepts. On the one hand, orthodox Islam had no doubts about the propriety of tolerating Christianity – a different religion but the same God – and could argue itself into a grudging tolerance of Indian idolatry and the social system that went with it. And on the other hand, the Muslims could extricate the concepts of the Greeks and Indians from their ethnic matrices much as the Iranians appear to have done before them. At the same time, no integral Greek or Indian identity resurfaced in Islam. There was no restoration of a Muslim Byzantium,[3] let alone of Muslim Guptas; there was no Greek or Indian Shu'ūbism; there was no Indian Companion of the Prophet, and his Greek Companion, Ṣuhayb, appropriately lost his ethnic nerve to seek comfort in a spurious Arab genealogy.[4] And when eventually the Greeks of Anatolia entered the Islamic world, they did so not as Muslim Greeks but as Muslim Turks; while the Muslims of India have recently done their best to follow in the footsteps of the Greek Ṣuhayb.

The Iranian case was very different. Iran was swallowed whole at an early stage in the history of the Islamic expansion. The remnants of the Byzantine armies had Byzantium to retreat to; the Asāwira ended up in Baṣra as the allies of the conquerors.[5] There might be Iranian princes in China[6] and Iranian merchants in India; but they were small-scale communities of refugees. Despite the massive and early Median rebellion chronicled by Sebeos,[7] there remained no vast seas of unsubjugated territory in which the integral tradition could persist untouched by Islam. The Iranians had to make it inside the Islamic world or not at all.

The result was head-on collision. If the core of Hellenism was its concepts, they could to some extent be borrowed; if the core of Hinduism was its castes, they could to a great extent be left alone. *Homo philosophicus* was rather too elevated, and *homo hierarchicus* rather too close to the grass-roots, for either to be hit by Islamic conquest where it hurt most; both concepts and castes being somewhat marginal to the ground on which Islam is most densely defined. But in the case of Iran no oblique accommodation of this kind was conceivable. The God of the Aryans was as much the *fatalis genius*[8] of his people as the God of Israel. In Achaemenid times of course Israel had known its place, and relations between the two Gods had been amicable enough.[9] But when the Ishmaelites expropriated the God of Israel and set out to conquer the world with him, there was little to hold his exaggerated jealousy in check. The stakes on each side were an identity in which ethnicity, religion and polity were fused under the aegis of a single tutelary deity: Byzantium might be taken to pieces, but Iran could only be smashed.

In setting out the outcome of this collision, we may begin with the polity. On the one hand, we have in Iran a polity with a strong intrinsically religious status: *dīn* and *dawla*, religion and state, were twins. Twinship is not of course the same thing as the identity of *dīn* and *dawla* which characterises the Islamic concept of the imamate; but it is a far more intimate relationship than that which obtained in Byzantium, where Judaic *dīn* and Roman *dawla* were not even blood-relations. And on the other hand, we have a conquering faith in which the polity was likewise intrinsically religious in status. Christianity was in general as happy to anoint the Woden-begotten kinglets and *rois thaumaturges* of the peoples it converted as it had earlier been pleased to recognise the Roman emperor.[10] Even in the case of conquest Christianity, there was no intrinsically religious reason why Christian conquistadors should not respect the vestigial polities of their subjects;[11] while even in the case of barbarian Christianity, there was no intrinsically religious reason why the Christian barbarians should not revive a Holy Roman Empire. Not so in Islam. In a few outlying areas the Muslim conquistadors did, it is true, accept the continuance of the traditional principalities: witness the protectorate exercised over the native dynasty of Usrūshana.[12] Equally in a few outlying areas the native polities eventually reemerged out of such protectorates in Islamic guise: witness the Khwārizmshāhs.[13] But there was little prospect of such a development in Iran.

So after the failure of the initial attempts at restoration, the tradition of the Zoroastrian polity was isolated in the mountains of Daylam. In due course the turn of the Daylamites came, and the Būyids, like the Parthians a millennium before them, claimed descent from the fallen dynasty and

revived their title of 'King of Kings'.[14] That this Muslim dynasty should have taken this step is a striking testimony to the Iranian determination to survive in Islam rather than not at all. But though the Daylamites were willing to drop their hostility towards Islam for a 'Holy Persian Empire',[15] the Muslims were not willing to accept it; and the residue of the Būyid adventure was a contribution to Muslim titulature rather than any deeper sense of continuity with Sasanid Iran.

In terms of religion the virtual demise of Zoroastrianism is a dramatic index of the impact of Islam and the totality of its conquest. There is today a Christian country of Greece and a Hindu country of India; but the Zoroastrians are merely a minority. The demise was not of course immediate: as late as the tenth century there was still a politically live survival of the old religion in Daylam, just as there was a doctrinally live one in ninth-century Fārs; and the prominence of Hellenic categories in the ninth-century books and the very existence of a Zoroastrian scripture in written form are quite possibly indications of a Zoroastrian capacity to adapt to the new environment.[16] But there could be no serious question of a religious restoration in Iran: this time the Kings of Kings had no Kartīr. Who then could the Aryans be when they no longer had the Magi for their priests?

In the first instance the question was whether something of the old religion could be merged with something of Islam by the syncretic prophets of the second half of the eighth century. But their success was transient: no Iranian Barghawāṭa emerged from the career of Bihāfarīd, and the expectation of an early Khārijite heretic that God would send a new prophet from among the non-Arabs to abrogate the religion of Muḥammad,[17] however apt an anticipation of twentieth-century Turkey, remained unfulfilled in medieval Iran.

There was thus no choice but to accept the Islamic framework as given, and the issue was then whether an Iranian identity could be accommodated within it. For reasons which will be set out more fully at a later stage, Shī'ism provided a particularly receptive version of the Islamic framework. For one thing the infallible imam and the King of Kings were the victims of the same Sunnī history – and did not Ḥusayn marry a Persian princess?[18] And for another, Shī'ite esotericism was a potentially syncretic doctrine – and was not the Prophet's Persian Companion a central figure in this esotericism? If a contemporary Syriac source for the rebellion of Mukhtār insists on the ethnic heterogeneity of his followers and fully expects them to overthrow the Arab dominion,[19] small wonder that the later Carmathians fully accepted the Persian impostor whom they expected to overthrow the Arab religion.[20]

The rapprochement between Shī'ism and Iran was nonetheless a very

limited one. To a certain extent, this was a matter of historical accident: the Būyids having missed their chance, it was not until the rise of the Ṣafawids that Shī'ism was superimposed on the after-image of Sasanid Iran; and by this time the structure of Islamic civilisation had set to an extent which precluded the development of this external symmetry into an internal harmony. Even so, it may be doubted whether it would have made much difference if Iran had become a Shī'ite country under the aegis of the Būyids. It is of course perfectly possible for a Shī'ite sect to identify itself with a non-Arab ethnicity, as did the Nuqṭawīs in Iran,[21] or to assimilate vividly un-Islamic ideas in such a milieu, as did the Nizārīs in India. But the sort of sect which does this is *ipso facto* marginal to the Islamic scene. Equally, it is perfectly possible for a non-Arab people to adopt a Shī'ism which is indisputably central in its Islamic status, as with the Imāmism of modern Iran. But the very centrality of such a tradition precludes any very effective articulation of a non-Arab identity. Imāmism took shape as a learned and respectable heresy in the Sunnī and Arabic-speaking milieu of urban Iraq, and its leaders, though they might prudently flatter a Būyid as 'King of Kings',[22] were no Bektashis onto whose faith the gentile excesses of the Nuqṭawīs or Nizārīs could have been grafted.[23]

It is of course true that any universal religion has to come to some sort of terms with the particular. The point about Islam is that it does so only on terms which, from the point of view of an aspiring non-Arab nation, are very unfavourable: extreme heresy or popular superstition. The cosmology of the Nuqṭawīs is an example of the first; the myth whereby the Ait Atta Berbers have contrived to bestow an Islamic status on their local sacred mountain an example of the second.[24] The Iranians too had their superstitions whereby they sought to construct for themselves a comfortable ethnic niche in Islam.[25] But since the Iranians were too large and too central a people to opt for either the extremism of the Nuqṭawīs or the ignorant superstition of the Ait Atta, their ethnic particularity of necessity remained without adequate articulation in Islam.[26]

Hence the only field in which a lasting resurgence of Iran could take place was culture. The culture of pre-Islamic Iran was as religiously focussed as that of Arab Islam. But despite – or because of – the extensive destruction of the old tradition, there was at least the possibility of the resurfacing of a decontaminated Iranian culture in the Islamic world.

In the first place there was the possibility of an Iranian cultural comeback in the language of the conquerors: Shu'ūbism. It was a vigorous but hopeless movement. When a thousand years earlier Manetho and Berossus had rendered the past glories of Egypt and Babylon into the language of their Greek conquerors, they had done so as priests, members of an

indigenous elite who were not without a certain honour in the Hellenistic world as the repositories of the ancient wisdom of their peoples. But there were no *mages islamisés*: in ninth-century Iran a high priest like Manushchihr[27] wrote only in the archaic hieratic language of his own community. The restatement of the Iranian heritage in Arabic was thus the work not of priests but of renegades. The Iranian *mawālī* were not an entrenched elite perpetuating an ancient tradition; they were the despised *naturalisés* of a society of tribal conquerors, civilised *evolués* to barbarism. Their desertion of their own society did not of course mean that they had been decontaminated in the process: scratch a Shu'ūbī, they said, and you found a Zoroastrian.[28] The point is that Islam had no need to do anything in the nature of appealing to the Iranian tradition in such a context; it merely absorbed such of its detritus as it cared to.

In the second place, there was the possibility of creating a provincial Iranian culture inside the Islamic milieu.[29] There was no question here of a direct continuation of the old tradition: Avestic in Muslim Iran had none of the cultural status of Sanscrit in Muslim Java, and the continuity of Javanese literature in the indigenous script after the reception of Islam finds no parallel in Pahlavi.[30] So the new literary language consisted instead of the vernacular written in the Arabic script, and its use was initially often merely utilitarian in motive. It was however a phenomenon very different from the occasional appearance of Greek in Arabic script for the purposes of the propagation of Islamic knowledge:[31] Persian became an Islamic literary language as Greek did not. And having done so, it provided a medium in which the Iranian tradition could be made available in Muslim Iran: the *Shāhnāme* became the Koran,[32] or as we might say the Homer,[33] of the Iranians. In contrast to the abortive character of the political and religious manifestations of Iran in Islam, this cultural resurgence proved definitive. And it is a measure of its strength that when in the succeeding centuries the Greeks and Indians eventually entered Islam, it was as provinces of Iranian, not of Arab Islam that their cultural assimilation was effected.

The remaining provinces within the borders of Islamic conquest – Egypt, Spain and North Africa – all acquired impeccable Muslim façades: unlike the Fertile Crescent they contributed virtually nothing to metropolitan Islam, and unlike Persia they failed to retain a provincial distinctiveness. The reasons are not unnaturally to be found behind the façades, and they can best be set out as inversions of the cases we have already examined.

If we start by looking behind the façade of Muslim Egypt, we are

back with the Copts; and the degree of effacement of Coptic Egypt is in some ways surprising. In the first place, the Coptic identity was comparable in strength to those of Iraq; its initial resilience is strikingly suggested by Sebeos, who refers to massive Arab conversions to Christianity in Egypt at a time when the political balance of power had momentarily changed.[34] Equally the homogenisation of truth had proceeded even further in Egypt than in Syria, so that to that extent Egypt might appear a suitable locus for the transmission of deethnicised culture. One might thus expect to find in Islam a Coptic heritage comparable to that of the Nestorians. That this was not so is above all a reflection of the fact that the Coptic church was a church of peasants as the Nestorian church was one of nobles: Coptic Egypt was in other words a socially inverted Iraq. The significance of the inversion is apparent in three ways.

First, the rusticity of the Coptic church meant that the province converted slowly. The Copts being accustomed to looking to peasant leaders, whether in the village or the monastery, the departure or decline of the aristocracy did not affect them as it did the peasants of Assyria; and when exposed to the pressure of Arab taxation, they fled from their villages to other districts or to monasteries, but not to Arab cities as did the peasants of Babylonia.[35] The result was an impressive Coptic resistance to conversion; and despite occasional waves of apostasy,[36] it was only after fiscal pressure had driven the peasantry at large to rebellion under the early 'Abbāsids that the destruction of village organisation in the ensuing repression finally cleared the way for the slow but inexorable conversion of Egypt to Islam.[37]

Secondly, rusticity meant that the Copts had little to contribute. Greek intellection having failed to be accepted by the Coptic church, the inward-turned rusticity of the Coptic masses was matched by an outward-turned Alexandria and a Hellenised aristocracy; so that when the latter were cut off from the wider Greek world by the Arab conquests, they either departed or died out. The school of Alexandria eked out a tenuous existence for a century before it moved on to Antioch, Ḥarrān and finally Baghdad;[38] Khālid b. Yazīd b. Mu'āwiya could still get his books on alchemy from Greek philosophers in Egypt,[39] and the ninth-century Dhū 'l-Nūn al-Miṣrī was sufficiently familiar with both the Greek heritage of Alexandria and the Christian asceticism of the Egyptian countryside to combine them in his Islamic mysticism.[40] But what the Arabs found when they eventually opened up the solid ranks of the peasantry was essentially an ethnicity and a host of Egyptian saints. Just as Christian Egypt produced no philosophers to match the Nestorian *literati* who inherited the Alexandrian school in Baghdad,[41] so Muslim Egypt produced no school of law,[42] no theological movement[43] or wealth of poets, let alone a heresy or a political ideal. Only

when the province had acquired a solid Muslim culture from outside did it resume its old position of intellectual eminence.

Thirdly, rusticity meant that Egypt exchanged its distinctive provinciality in a Christian heresy for an imitative provinciality in orthodox Islam. One might perhaps have expected the Coptic identity to leave in Islam at least a residual particularism. But partly because the steady trickle of converts had few chances to mobilise their Coptic resources against the ethnic stranglehold of Islam, and more particularly because the Coptic identity was as innocent of cultural resources as was Syrian culture of ethnic resources, Coptic Egypt left not a rack behind. On the one hand there were no Coptic Muslims: Coptic disappeared as a spoken language even among Christians,[44] and even in Egyptian Arabic its resonances are strikingly weak.[45] And on the other there was only the faintest hint of a Coptic after-image. The Egyptians were not of course totally without interest in their pre-Islamic past: Pharaoh is more in their literature than a Koranic villain. But the Egypt of Murtadi[46] and his likes is a descendant of the Egypt of the astrologers,[47] not of the Egypt of the peasants; and the character of this genre is essentially a sensationalist antiquarianism, an indulgence in the gorgeous palaces and solemn temples of an occult and insubstantial pageant. It does perhaps bear the residual traces of a certain Coptic sound and fury;[48] but there is nothing in it to compare with the epic remembrance of pre-Islamic glory that pervades Firdawsī's *Shāhnāme*, or the emotional depth of Ibn Waḥshiyya's invocation of the Babylonian past. A heresy of less stubbornly metropolitan ambitions than Ismā'īlism could perhaps have saved the residual sound and fury;[49] but the interest of the Fāṭimids in their Egyptian base was confined to the resources it could provide them for ventures the meaning of which lay elsewhere. Hence where the residual particularism of the Iranian heritage and the accidental particularity of the Imāmī tradition in Iran could be brought into a certain external symmetry, Egypt had both lost the residue and escaped the accident.

The Copts did of course survive as Copts despite their adoption of Arabic, and unlike the remnant of Assyria they retained the title deeds to their Pharaonic past. But there was little basis in this for the Copts to create or participate in a modern Egyptian identity. They were in effect exiles in their own country: the willingness of the Copts to ingather their Muslim neighbours in the name of Egypt was met by the readiness of the Muslims to despatch their Coptic neighbours to Palestine in the name of Islam.[50] And the pyramids they had to offer were at best an ambiguous asset: Pharaonism in a Muslim Egypt with a Coptic minority was doubly damned as contumaceously pagan and constructively Christian.[51] Egypt in Islam was not so much a nation or even a country as simply a place.

Hellenistic Egypt dreamt of the return of the Pharaohs, and Byzantine Egypt might in time have dreamt of restoring the Ptolemies; but Ottoman Egypt could dream only of a Mamlūk restoration. To the extent that Egypt dreamt at all, one could say that it was still a country. But it was a country in which the model of Byzantine Egypt had been not so much transposed as inverted. Under the Greeks it was the peasant masses who had represented the introverted particularism, while the elite had been firmly orientated towards the outside world: take away the Apions and their aristocratic colleagues, and Egypt was still the residue of Kēme. But under the Ottomans it was the elite and not the peasants who represented the particularism: take away 'Alī Bey and his khedivial successors, and Egypt became the rump of the United Arab Republic.

Spain is at first sight a much more puzzling case. For one thing, Roman Spain had both an imitative provincial culture with all that implies of cultural acceptance, and a Hispano-Roman identity with all that implies of ethnic security. For another, Spain was both a very remote province in the Muslim world and also, as it happened, a politically dissident one. Yet Islamic civilisation presented as impeccably oriental a façade in Spain as in Egypt or coastal North Africa.[52] Even the Christians displayed a degree of assimilation into Islamic culture that is scarcely parallelled in the east,[53] and finds no analogue among the Zoroastrians of Iran: there is no such thing as Mozarab Persia. Conversely, Spain provides no parallels to the resurfacing of Iran in Islam. There was no move among native Muslims to retore a Roman empire or a Gothic kingship,[54] and even the Mozarab Christians produced martyrs,[55] not pretenders. Romance, for all its persistence as a vernacular, never became on Islamic literary language in the manner of Persian: the point of the *Shāhnāme* is its resonant evocation of a glorious national past, that of the Romance couplets in the Andalusian *muwashshaḥs* is precisely their innocence of literary tradition.[56] It is thus appropriate that the most striking feature of Spanish Shu'ūbism – such as it was – should have been its dependence on Iranian models.[57]

There is a similar absence of any religious quest for a Spanish distinctiveness within Islam. Spain produced no Bihāfarīd: the only syncretic prophet to appear on Spanish soil was a Berber.[58] Nor did Spain evince any receptivity towards the heretical, ethnically less constraining forms of Islam.[59] Even its choice of Sunnī law school tells the same story: instead of distinguishing itself as the last refuge of Syrian Awzā'ism, Spain adopted the most fixatedly metropolitan law school of them all, the Mālikism of Medina.[60] Equally the distinctiveness of prolonged Umayyad rule does not seem to have been exploited to set the country apart. Not of course that there was anything intrinsically Spanish about the Umayyads –

Qurashī rule was after all something the inhabitants of Spain had in common with those of Sind; but even if the Spanish were not inclined to become western Marwānites,[61] their Umayyad regime made both for a measure of alienation and for a measure of archaism vis-à-vis the metropolitan Islamic world: the *jund* still constituted the foundation of the Spanish army long after it had given way to *mamlūk*s as far west as Ifrīqiya.[62] But if Spain was in consequence somewhat different, it made not the slightest attempt to elevate the different into the distinctive. The Muslims of Spain might tend to lag behind the times, but their willingness to bring themselves up to date was not in doubt: Umayyad genealogy was no bar to 'Abbāsid hairstyles.[63]

Yet it was not as if the Spanish were becoming a solid population of Arabised Muslims, as was more or less the case in coastal North Africa. There were large numbers of Christians ready to die to flaunt their non-Muslim faith, and there were large numbers of Muslims ready to fight to vindicate their non-Arab identity.[64] Yet when Ibn Ḥafṣūn, the greatest of them, sought to give more pointed expression to this non-Arab identity in Islam, the only way he could do so was by becoming a Christian.[65]

The key to this situation lies behind the façade in the position of the Mozarabs, the group which constitutes the inversion of the Iranian *mawālī*: where the Iranian Muslims fought to retain their culture in Islam, thus creating a distinctive Irano-Muslim culture, the Spanish Christians were happy to extract the culture from Islam, thus creating a distinctive Hispano-Christian culture. And the key to this again is evidently the plural character of the Spanish heritage in contrast to that of Iran. In the first place, Spain was culturally nothing more or less than a Roman province. Pre-Roman Britain had a certain metropolitan cachet as the centre of advanced Druidic studies,[66] and post-Roman Britain, in so far as it was not Germanic, was straightforwardly Celtic. But there was nothing comparable about Spain. Secondly, Spain was an undifferentiated province of western Christianity. And thirdly, Spain had undergone Germanic conquest. This latter had neither disappeared without trace as in Africa nor created a solidly barbarian country as in England; nor yet had it issued in an attempt at an integral Gothic identity in the manner of Arab Islam. But it did mean that by the time of the Islamic conquest Spain possessed a Germanic polity of its own which simply coexisted with the wider Spanish membership of Roman culture and western Christendom.

Superficially, the geography of Islamic conquest then created a situation similar to that which arose in Iran: a Spanish Daylam in Las Asturias, where the old order took refuge under a line of Gothic pretenders, as against a Spanish Fārs in Andalusia, where the old religion lived on under Muslim rule. But the plurality and character of Spanish allegiances

rendered the potentialities of the two situations very different. In the first place, Las Asturias might be the last refuge of Gothic kingship, but it had no such significance for Roman culture or western Christianity at large. In the long run the best the Daylamites could manage was to turn Muslim and restore the King of Kings within an Islamic world they had penetrated as mercenaries. But the Christians of Las Asturias had the rest of Christian Europe behind them: they had no need of Zaydī missionaries and proceeded to restore the Roman empire[67] outside an Islamic world which they entered by way of *reconquista*. It was because they had something politically distinctive in the shape of the Gothic monarchy that the Spanish could reestablish the old order in the mountains; but it was equally because the Roman and Christian components of the old order were not Spanish but simply European that they could keep hold of all of it and ultimately reimpose it on the south.

In the second place, the same plurality worked out very differently in the conditions of the south. Islamic conquest deleted the Gothic polity to leave a Roman and Christian province. In terms of religion, those who remained Christians now benefited from the lack of intrinsic cultural allegiance in Christianity as they had benefited before from its lack of intrinsic political allegiance: just as they had been able to accept a Gothic kingship without Gothic ethnicity or Arian religion, so now they could take Arab culture without Arab ethnicity or Islamic faith. The cultural multivalence of Christianity thus combined with the survival of the old order beyond the Islamic frontier to enable the Mozarabs to borrow without succumbing. Both inside and outside Islam, the zealous provinciality of the Spanish thus held constant as they switched from a Roman to an Islamic metropolis; but whereas the Muslim façade created by cultural allegiance to Baghdad was a rather undifferentiated one, the Christian backcloth to which it gave rise was necessarily highly unusual.[68]

In contrast to the Copts and the Mozarabs, the Berbers behind the façade of Aghlabid Ifrīqiya loomed so large in North African history that from time to time they broke through to present a façade of their own. The Berbers were no one's province. Yet they could not conceivably pass as a metropolis in the manner of the Iranians. They were in fact nobody to the civilised world, just a marginal barbarian population which possessed all the tribes without culture that the cultured Syrians were in need of. And in this the people with whom they had most in common was their Arab conquerors. Coming up against the Arabs did for the Berbers something which the Romans had never done for them: it brought them into a confrontation in which the idiom of their opponents could be taken over to articulate their own situation. Islam was a *dīn mubīn*, a plain

religion of tribes and rabbis. Cities, aristocracies, concepts and everything characteristic of civilisation require for their smooth functioning a religion not easily understood, as the Iranians were eventually proud to describe their own;[69] and civilisation suffered accordingly when the tribes and rabbis moved in. But the Syrians who were the victims of civilisation and the Berbers who had no need of it both stood to gain in their own particular ways. The Syrians could not acquire an identity out of the values of Graeco-Roman culture while denying that they were Greeks, and the Berbers could not articulate one while denying that they were Romans. Neither wished to follow the example of the Spanish, who were more Roman than the Romans, and where settled Syria attempted a provincial synthesis, the Berbers instead elected to remain apart. Unlike the Syrians, the Berbers had nothing to contribute and no wish to become Arabs; but they *understood* the tribes and they could *use* the rabbis, and provided they could safeguard their ethnicity against the pull of an Arab Islam, it was easy enough for them to articulate an identity in terms of Islamic values. They had in any case little to lose in the process: there was no such thing as a consolidated Berber culture, polity and faith. And the richness and variety of the Berber presence in Muslim North Africa as contrasted with their barbarian anonymity in the days of the Romans provides one of the most striking illustrations of the environment in which Islam is most truly at home.

The Berber attempt to articulate an identity in Islamic terms took two forms, much as in Iran. The more radical was the development of Berber calques on Arab Islam: Berber prophets came with Berber revelations.[70] The type ultimately disappeared; but in one instance it issued in an independent and religiously distinctive Berber polity, Barghawāṭa, which lasted into the twelfth century. More moderately, Berber particularism found expression in the adoption of heretical forms of Islam.[71] On the one hand we have Berber Khārijism, institutionalised above all in the Ibāḍī imamate of Tāhart with its Iranian dynasty and Shu'ūbī tendencies;[72] and on the other we have Berber Shī'ism in the shape of the Idrīsids, the scatter of 'Alid statelets of the same period,[73] and the Ismā'īlism of the Kutāma. Again, the phenomenon ultimately more or less disappeared: the Ibāḍī survival in North Africa today is parochial, and the Sharīfian sultans, for all their 'Alid genealogy, were no Ṣafawids to the Berbers. But the eventual victory of Mālikism in North Africa was as hard-won as it was initially effortless in Spain.

It is however in the political dimension that the elegance of this shift from being different outside Rome to being different inside Islam is most apparent. Unlike the Daylamites, the Berbers had no political past to lose in Islam, not even a Vandal kingship to take into the mountains. In Daylam

the work of the heretical missionaries was in one way superfluous: to the extent that they remembered the Sasanian monarchy, the Daylamites were scarcely in need of an Islamic imamate. But the Berbers having no such memories, their political ideologies had of necessity to be religious in inspiration. To that extent they were in the same predicament as Fasir and Axido, the Donatist *duces sanctorum* who had raised hell in the African hinterland in the days of Augustine.[74] Yet the Donatist cause, for all its righteousness, could not be an intrinsically political one: Christianity has no polity, only an occluded messiah and an emasculated quietism, and the Circumcellions had accordingly to fight as back-stage participants in an ecclesiastical schism of the coastal cities.

In this situation the coming of Islam meant a drastic ecological redistribution of political meaning. In the old days to rule on the coast was to represent eternal Rome, whereas to raise the tribes in the interior was to be beyond the pale of civilised politics. But in an Islamic perspective this contrast was reversed: to rule on the coast was now to represent a presumptively illegitimate authority, while to raise the tribes in the hinterland was the political work of the saint. So where Fasir and Axido had to coax their meaning out of an apolitical coastal schism, Abū 'Abdallāh al-Shī'ī and Abū Yazīd took theirs directly from the doctrine of the imamate. And whereas the Muslim Daylamites issued from their mountains and restored the descendants of Ardashīr, the Muslim Berbers did so on behalf of the family of the Prophet. The intransigence of Islamic civilisation had shattered Iran in the east and mopped up the Graeco-Roman provinces in the west; but the Berbers were uniquely placed to make this intransigence their own.

12
THE FATE OF HAGARISM

The power of Hagarism to reshape the world of antiquity lay in its union of Judaic values with barbarian force. Yet for all its power, this fusion of truth and identity was marred by an irresolvable tension. The tension was an abiding one, but it can best be approached through the contrast between two very early accounts of Hagarene attempts to spread their faith. The first describes the martyrdom of the Byzantine garrison of Gaza shortly after the conquest. The garrison was invited to abandon their faith, deny Christ, and participate in the ceremonies of the Saracens; in return they would enjoy the same honour as the Saracens themselves.[1] Fortunately for our knowledge of the incident, the garrison stood firm and were martyred to a man.[2] The second testimony refers to the arrival of the conquerors on Mt Sinai to force the local Saracens to apostatise from Christianity.[3] All but one surrendered[4] and left to join the Saracens in their religion. The implication is clear that the conquerors displayed not the slightest interest in the conversion of the Christian monks.[5]

The disparity between the attitude of the Saracens towards the soldiers of Gaza on the one hand and the monks of Sinai on the other can to some extent be accounted for in chronological terms. We do not know exactly when the conquerors arrived on Mt Sinai, but it would presumably have been some time after the fall of Gaza. It can hardly be doubted that the fate of the Gazan garrison, confronted with a choice reserved in classical Islam for Arab polytheists, reflects the initial anti-Christian animus of Judaeo-Hagarism; while the events on Mt Sinai might be seen in the light of the subsequent Hagarene retreat into the ethnically parochial world of the religion of Abraham. The other early testimonia on conversion are to some degree amenable to the same treatment. There is, however, a more analytical way to approach the disparity. Even in the form of Judaeo-Hagarism, the new religion was founded in a distinct ethnic identity;[6] and even in the form of the religion of Abraham, it was still in possession of a potentially universal truth.[7] If it made sense to martyr the garrison of Gaza in vindication of the truth, it equally made sense to ignore the monks of Sinai in the course of realising the identity. And it also made sense to be mixed up: it was impossible to maximise truth and identity concurrently.

The more obvious course was doubtless to maximise identity. Hagarism was after all a quest for a truth to fit a Hagarene genealogy,[8] and since the early Hagarenes were conquerors, not missionaries, there was no occasion for the immediate sacrifice of ethnicity which marks the spread of Christianity. Hagarism could thus seek to remain an ethnic faith after the manner of Judaism, and complain that its proselytes were as hard on Ishmael as leprosy.[9] In concrete terms, this was initially a comfortable option. On the one hand, it meant that Hagarism paid dividends in terms of the ideological consolidation of the ranks of the conquerors. As late as the time of Walīd I, the Taghlibī chief was martyred on the grounds that it was shameful that the chief of the Arabs should adore the cross.[10] And on the other hand, the maximisation of identity served at first to keep those non-Arabs who threw in their lot with the conquerors firmly in their place, irrespective of the truth or otherwise of their religious convictions: even the convert who called himself Muhājir was just as much a client as the hanger-on who retained his ancestral faith. Thus in both respects Hagarism was an apt consecration of the initial structure of the conquest society.

The idea of a Hagarism in the ethnic image of Judaism was nevertheless problematic: in two relevant respects, the Hagarenes were not like the Jews. In the first place, if the Hagarenes were a chosen people, their status was embarrassingly parvenu.[11] In principle they might have resolved this difficulty by recasting the entire history of monotheism since Abraham to the greater glory of the Ishmaelites, starting with the award of the covenant to Ishmael in a Hagarene Pentateuch.[12] In practice of course they hadn't the nerve. They were thus in the position of setting up as the heirs of the very tradition that had disinherited them, receiving back the spirit of prophecy after a disconcertingly prolonged ethnic détour.[13] But more than this, their parvenu status meant that Hagarism could be ethnically exclusive only at the cost of being epistemologically parochial. Muḥammad had perforce to be presented as the belated founder of a community parallel to those of Moses and Jesus; he could not displace them or appear as their linear successor. The truth status of Islam had thus to be hedged about with the prophetological relativism that is so clear an index of its failure, even in its classical form, to become an unreservedly universal faith.[14] So the social defense of the Hagarene identity was purchased at the cost of the doctrinal down-grading of the Hagarene truth. In the second place, the Hagarene identity was not in the long run socially defensible; and this for the very reason that the Hagarenes, unlike the Jews, were conquerors. The gentile world can be excluded from the ghetto because it has in general no wish to enter it, whereas conquerors benefit from no such indifference towards entry into their ranks on the part of their subjects. The ethnic self-definition of the Hagarenes could with-

stand the early trickle without undue ideological strain; but it could hardly hope to survive uneroded when the trickle subsequently become a flood. Any insistence on the maximisation of identity thus threatened in the long run to down-grade both identity and truth.

The alternative was the maximisation of truth. Even in the atavistic form of the religion of Abraham, Hagarism was more than the veneration of an ancestor: it was also monotheist truth in its primitive purity, the norm from which other, more sophisticated communities had fallen away. *A fortiori* the elevation of Muḥammad to the role of a new scriptural prophet aligned with Moses and Jesus conferred on his message an unambiguously universal status. At the same time it was some feather in the Arab cap that the history of monotheist revelation should be sealed by an Ishmaelite. But there was a catch. If the message was to be of so elevated a character, in what way could the Ishmaelite ethnicity of the bearer be more than a historical accident? And if that was the case, it was not obvious how the role of the Arabs in the early history of the faith could possess any intrinsic religious significance, or how an intrinsically religious justification could be found for their subsequent primacy within the community.[15] The point is already implicit in the incident of the Gazan garrison: if Hagarism was a truth universal enough to require the assent of Roman soldiers, it was only logical that the conquerors should reinforce its appeal by offering to share their honour with their defeated enemies. For if the maximisation of identity made for an ethnic faith in the image of Judaism, the maximisation of truth made for a gentile faith in the image of Christianity; and it is noteworthy that while all Christians are figuratively children of the promise, the only literal ethnicity unrepresented in Christianity is that of the Jews. Were the Hagarenes then to go the way of the Judaeo-Christians before them?[16]

In the event the respective claims of truth and identity coexisted uneasily in a religious community made up of an Arab core which was not quite a chosen people[17] and a non-Arab penumbra which was not quite gentilic.[18] Islam had in some measure accepted the demise of the ethnic 'life apart', and had become in some sense a universal religion; but it had done so without its prophet ceasing to be honoured in his own country.[19] The relative religious standing of Arab and non-Arab within the community was accordingly a matter of extensive confusion. On the one hand the Koran proclaimed the most noble in the sight of God to be the most pious (49:13), while innumerable traditions insisted that there was no genealogy between God and the believer other than that of obedience,[20] and that the Arab had no merit over the non-Arab except by piety:[21] attestations of a universalistic emphasis on the achievement of religious merit of a type familiar from Christianity. And on the other hand, we find the Prophet

proclaiming love of the Arabs to be part of the faith and warning his community that 'if you hate the Arabs, you hate me':[22] sentiments which Christian tradition would hardly have placed in the mouth of its founder in regard to his own ethnicity, and at the same time attestations of a contrary tendency towards the allocation of religious merit by genealogical ascription.[23] Two antithetical principles were thus invested with salvatory effect.[24] The relationship of conversion to ethnicity displays a similar ambivalence. On the one hand, the lawyers rejected the old relegation of the convert to the inferior status of client[25] – a practical move towards disengagement from the structure of the conquest society in favour of a gentilic Islam. But on the other hand, they effected this rejection by transposing clientage into kinship and insisting on the automatic assimilation of the convert, or his progeny, to Arab ethnicity[26] – a theoretical reassertion of the old Hagarene yearning for the ethnic community of a chosen people, and one which found ritual support in the persistence of circumcision. All men are of Adam and Adam was of dust; and yet Adam spoke Arabic in Paradise.[27] Hagarism could neither sustain the fusion of religion and ethnicity on the Judaic model, nor reconcile itself to their separation on the Christian model; the ethnic collision of Hagarism with the peoples of antiquity had issued in a civilisation which fell firmly and irredeemably between two stools.

If the Hagarenes set out as a chosen people after the fashion of the Jews, they soon acquired a chosen political institution on the model of the Samaritans. The fusion of religion and ethnicity was thus matched by a fusion of religion and politics. Unlike the Christians, the Hagarenes had no reason to dissolve their original messianism into an apolitical spirituality: they suppressed their messiah, but their kingdom remained very much of this world. Unlike the Germans, the Hagarenes could make normative sense of their kingdom without recourse either to a profane tradition of barbarian kingship[28] or to the imperial traditions of the conquered territories: the disparity of roles when the Gothic king Euric took to behaving like the chief priest of the Arian sect is elegantly resolved in Islam.[29] The transposition of messiah into high priest had thus preserved the intrinsically religious character of the original Hagarene polity.[30]

The move from Syria to Babylonia did not entirely destroy this intrinsic sanctity. But if the idea of the imamate survived, it was increasingly shorn of practical efficacy. The high priest had fallen among rabbis: for all the resources which power and priestliness had put at the disposal of Ma'mūn,[31] it was Ibn Ḥanbal who fought on his home ground. High-priestly authority in orthodox Islam, though never quite subjected to formal occlusion, was deeply corroded.[32] The imamate was no longer embedded in a wider

priestly context: the integral priestliness of the Samaritan model had given way to an uneasy coexistence between a high-priesthood and a rabbinical substructure – a substructure long accustomed to political alienation and the absence of priestly authority, and which in its Islamic form lacked even the residual organisational resources of late rabbinic Judaism.[33] The characteristic rabbinic disjunction of piety and power was thus mapped into Islam in a particularly individualist form at the expense of the high-priesthood. The pall of doubt which Abū Yūsuf's association with the authorities casts on his reliability as a transmitter of religious tradition,[34] the quiet obstinacy which Ibn Ḥanbal opposed indifferently to the persecution he suffered at the hands of Ma'mūn and the patronage he suffered at those of Mutawakkil,[35] the ritual intransigence of Saḥnūn's performance in the unwanted role of cadi,[36] all these are the characteristic motifs of a culture in which religious virtue resides not in the legitimate exercise of political power, but in the avoidance of contamination by it.

The flight of piety and learning to the rabbinate left the priestly vestments of power increasingly threadbare. On the doctrinal level, the grounds on which the early 'Abbāsids based their legitimist claim were not accepted into orthodox Islam,[37] while the grounds on which orthodox Islam recognised the legitimacy of the 'Abbāsids destroyed the point of the 'Abbāsid revolution.[38] Politically, the imamate as the central institution of the Islamic polity ceased in one way or another to be operational: it matters little from this point of view whether we take our stand on the long-drawn-out indignity of 'Abbāsid faineance,[39] the resurgence of kingship in the east,[40] or the debasement of caliphal titulature in the west.[41] The Sunnī imamate, in so far as it continued to exist, tended to become more of an honorific than an identity,[42] and Sunnī Islam as a political doctrine came to be concerned less with the constitution of legitimate political authority than with the more or less indiscriminate recognition of the fact of political power.[43] The complementary process was the relegation of sacred government to the more or less heretical backlands. In the 'life apart' of the Ibāḍī and Zaydī imamates, the high-priesthood was transformed into an institution normatively viable only amid the anarchic tribal politics and gross material deprivations of the mountains and deserts, a style of government in intimate ideological resonance with the inner-Arabian career of the Prophet himself.

The alternative to the imamate was the adoption of the political culture of the conquered peoples. As with the *de facto* acceptance of gentile ethnicity, this was a course at once forced on the Hagarenes by their situation as barbarian conquerors and precluded by their Judaic values; and again the result was complex and disharmonic. On the one hand, the Hagarenes rejected the imperial traditions in virtue of which the government of the

civilised world had passed as legitimate. Not being mere Muslims, they could not accept the empires in the manner of the Christians; and not being mere Arabs, they could not restore them in the manner of the Franks. What the Muslims preserved from the political thought of Zoroastrian Iran was in the last resort not its values but its common sense:[44] politics had become economics *par excellence*.[45] The demise of political legitimacy outside the backlands was thereby complete: incapable itself of conferring a positive legitimacy on the government of a civilised society, Islam had at the same time destroyed the legitimatory resources of the traditions it had conquered. On the other hand, the Hagarenes had of necessity to perpetuate the machinery of imperial government in the lands they had subjugated; but they could not legitimate it in terms of their own religious values,[46] still less reshape those values to suit its needs.[47] In the history of China there is intimate and organic tension between Confucian theory and Legalist practice;[48] but between Islamic theory and pre-Islamic practice there is simply a yawning gulf.

Imperial rule and its social foundations are a complex and mimetic phenomenon, and such deprivation of legitimatory resources is not a trivial matter. In the first place, it does something to explain the demise of aristocracy in Islam: it is hardly surprising that the tribal aristocracy of conquest in due course disintegrated, but it is striking that, instead of giving way to a new imperial aristocracy, it lost its power to the generals and its *sharaf* to the saints – a characteristically Islamic disjunction.[49] In the second place, the scarcity of legitimatory resources at the disposal of Muslim rulers does something to explain the fact that the tribal army of conquest gave way not to Hagarene legionaries but to imported *mamlūk*s, a distinctively Muslim phenomenon.[50] The outcome was a style of government which, though it came to be more or less familiarly Muslim, could never be specifically Islamic.

The Islamic polity thus fell victim to the conspiracy of force and value to which it originally owed its existence. The old tribal hostility towards the alien and oppressive states of settled societies went well with the alienation of the rabbis from the profanity of all existing political power; and the result was that the political imagination of Islam remained fixated on the desert. This fixation is not without a certain affinity with a key value of Chinese Communism which might be expressed as 'better red than expert': political virtue resides in the perpetuation of the austere sanctity of the *dār al-hijra* in Yenan, not in the profane technocratic sophistication of the Cantonese litoral which the Maoist *muhājirūn* were eventually to conquer.[51] Whatever the future of redness and expertise in China, the 'Abbāsid attempt to be both black and expert was a failure. Thereafter Islamic history polarised. On the one hand we have the imamates in the

backlands, true to their colours and bereft of expertise; and on the other, the merging of blackness and expertise in the grey quietism of settled Muslim society. Islamic history is thus marked by a menace of tribal incursion into settled society that is not just material, as in the case of traditional China, but also moral, and Islamic politics by a fundamental disjunction of sacred government and civilisation.

Something of the same relationship between Islam and the civilisation it had conquered recurs in the field of culture. On the one hand we have a heritage which was the peculiar treasure of the Hagarenes: a *Jāhiliyya*, complete with its heroism and its poetry, which emancipated the Muslims from dependence on that of the Greeks[52] and constituted the basis of Islamic literary culture. The Chinese might point snidely to the smell of sheep that tainted the poetry of *literati* of barbarian extraction; but Arabic poetry *is* the smell of camels. Yet if this heritage in a suitably elaborated form could displace the literary culture of antiquity more or less completely, it could not perform the same service for the Muslims in the domain of systematic thought. The Arab *Jāhiliyya* had evolved very differently from that of the Greeks: it was *ḥanīf*s, not Presocratics, who pointed the way from ignorance to wisdom in the Arabian desert, and a prophet, not a philosopher, who condemned the paganism of the poets. To think was to think in concepts, and concepts were a product of the cultural evolution of the Greeks. In principle, as we have seen, Islam could neither assimilate nor coexist with Greek intellection; yet in practice the Muslims could no more renounce the techniques of civilised thought than they could those of civilised government. The result was a profoundly dislocated culture.

The most sweeping example of this dislocation is the withering of intellectual coherence and emotional meaning in the structure of the Muslim universe. In this domain the Muslims were the heirs of two long-established universes, those of the Hebrews and the Greeks. The Hebrews were a minor people living cheek by jowl with their unique ethnic God. The smallness of scale and narrowness of focus of this universe had two complementary effects. On the one hand, it was a voluntaristic universe: there was no call for the will of its God to be institutionalised in a reliably regular form. But on the other, the arbitrariness was tempered by intimacy: Yahweh's ill-tempered outbursts were alarmingly hazardous for all concerned, but they were also reassuringly intelligible. The Greeks, by contrast, had put their gods in perspective and made over the universe to the systematic and regular operation of concepts. Whether we take our stand on the attempt to implant an intrinsic metaphysical meaning in the universe in the tradition of the Stoics, or the attempt to denude it in favour of a relentlessly materialist causality in the tradition of the Epicur-

eans, is from this point of view unimportant. Either way, the Greek universe was one emptied of personal intimacy but emancipated from personal arbitrariness.

In a sense the universes of the Hebrews and the Greeks were so different that it was futile to attempt a reconciliation.[53] Personal Gods and impersonal concepts are not made to mix, a fact as painfully concealed in Christian theology as it is exhuberantly displayed in Śaivite mythology.[54] Personal Gods can make an immediate moral sense of the universe,[55] impersonal concepts can make a distant causal sense of it; but it is impossible to maximise on emotional warmth and conceptual order concurrently.[56] Any religion which bases a systematic theology on the axiomatic omnipotence of God will accordingly be afflicted with Mu'tazilites worrying over the resulting moral incoherence; just as one basing it on his axiomatic goodness will engender Zurvanites worrying over the resulting causal incoherence. Yet a compromise between the two universes was in practice possible and, outside the insulated ethnic intimacy of the ghetto, indispensable. If the Hebrews could be represented by a heresy which took a soft line on concepts, and the Greeks by a school which took a similarly soft line of gods, there were clearly possibilities for reconciliation and conflation. Between the rabbis and the Epicureans there was little mediation to be accomplished; but the Christians and the Stoics could come to terms. On the one hand the Hebrew God receded to an appropriate metaphysical distance: whence the persistent Christian search for more intimate and familiar spiritual presences, despite repeated assurances of divine affection. But on the other hand Yahweh had now finally learnt to delegate: despite intermittent recrudescences of the miraculous, the actual running of the universe was to a large extent relinquished to concepts. Still in the last resort a despot, the Christian God was nevertheless by Hellenic standards a passably enlightened one. He himself was no longer given to very strenuous activity; but as a symbol over and above the impersonal laws, he evinced a compensatory stability. The Judaic *gesta Dei* had given way to a Greek divine essence, just as the pious conduct of the rabbis had given way to the conceptual orthodoxy of the bishops.

The Muslims, by contrast, inherited the worst of both universes. The confrontation between the two heritages here took place on very different terms. The result of the Hagarene conquest was to bring monotheism out of the ghetto in its most intransigent rabbinic form; but equally those who conquer the world cannot resolutely refuse the attempt to make causal sense of it, and conquest had given the Hagarenes easy access to the Hellenic resources that the attempt required. The result was irresolvable disharmony in place of Christian compromise. When a conceptual orthodoxy threatened to take over their over-extended ghetto, the Muslim rabbis

had themselves to develop a dogmatism that had no place in the rabbinic tradition: the intimate features of their personal God were reduced to a cold anthropomorphism expounded with doctrinaire obscurantism.[57] At the same time the theologians were forced to develop a conceptual Luddism that was no part of the intellectual tradition: the elegant concepts of the impersonal universe were reduced to an anticonceptual occasionalism, a bizarre fusion of theistic voluntarism and atheistic atomism in defence of the sovereignty of a Hebraic God against the wiles of Hellenic causality. Like the Christian God, Allah had receded from the world of his followers: where the Hebrews covenanted with their God, the Hagarenes merely submitted, and where Moses went up and down the mountain carrying tables and patching up quarrels, Muḥammad received his revelations through the mediation of an angelic underling. But unlike the Christian God, Allah did not make up for this distancing by learning to delegate: he had lost the intimacy of the Hebraic God but kept his arbitrariness, ceased to be a physical presence without becoming a metaphysical essence. Cut loose from the containing context of the ethnic 'life apart', yet untouched by the cosmopolitan concepts of the gentiles, the personality of the Hebrew God had given way to an inscrutable and alien omnipotence which emptied the universe alike of personal warmth and impersonal order. The effects of this emptiness are strikingly pervasive in later Islam. On the one hand we find almost everywhere in the Islamic world the attempt to restore the lost warmth in Ṣūfism: deprived of his personal God as a rabbi, even so intransigent a Ḥanbalite as Ibn Taymiyya succumbed to mysticism.[58] And on the other hand we have the bleak recognition of a universe without moral or causal sense characteristic of popular fatalism: submission to God has degenerated into resignation to a sort of occasionalist astrology.

At a somewhat less exalted level, this interaction meant that the Muslims inherited the causality of the Greek universe without its philosophical meaning. An intransigent voluntarism is after all a sort of theological equivalent of the Ibāḍī imamate: a fine assertion of principle, but not much help in the civilised world when it comes to getting things done. Even the devotees of an occasionalist God have to come to some kind of behavioural accommodation with the fact that they live in a universe of some causal autonomy. In such a universe sciences like medicine and astrology represent techniques of immense manipulative or predictive power. Just as Muslim rulers could not in practice dispense with the fiscal techniques of the pre-Islamic world in virtue of a doctrinaire legalism, so also they could not afford to do without the services of its doctors and astrologers in virtue of a doctrinaire occasionalism. Illiterate prophets are all very well in matters of religion; but in matters of science Lysenkos are an expensive ideological luxury. So the continuing market for the expedient

justice of the Persians was matched by a continuing market for the expedient science of the Greeks.[59] But if the practice was indispensable, the theory was unacceptable; the wider field of values in virtue of which the sciences of the Greeks were more than magical manipulations remained deeply suspect in Islam.[60]

The incoherence of Islamic civilisation in the dimensions of ethnicity, polity and world-view is thus a strikingly uniform one. A particularist Hagarism might have provided the religious sanction for a concrete 'life apart' somewhat in the manner of the Jews: a narrow vertical fusion in which a particular ethnic community was associated with a distinctive political and cultural pattern under the aegis of an intimately voluntarist God. A universalist Islam might have evolved into a 'mere religion' somewhat in the manner of Christianity: a thin horizontal stratum associated only by historical accident with a given polity and culture, content to accept its politics from the Persians and its wisdom from the Greeks. Neither alternative was historically on the cards: conquest had made the Hagarenes too permeable to stay like the Jews and too powerful to become like the Christians. And neither could have created a civilisation, as opposed to rejecting or accepting an existing one. But if the achievement was peculiar to Hagarism, so also was the cost. Hagarism ended up as neither one thing nor the other, neither comfortably compact nor comfortably diffuse. It was not only antiquity which suffered when the ancient contents were thrust into the Hagarene form; the fate of Hagarism in Islamic civilisation was in its own way just as unhappy.

13
SADDUCEE ISLAM

Without the fusion of barbarian force with Judaic value there would have been no such thing as Islamic civilisation, and the intransigent stance of Islam vis-à-vis the heritage of antiquity was consequently part of the price that had to be paid for its very existence. But if to think away this fusion of barbarian force and Judaic values is to think away the civilisation itself, it is by no means obvious that quite so much barbarian force in the primary stage, and quite the same Judaic values in the secondary evolution, were required to bring it about. The question thus arises whether Hagarism could have developed in a manner which would have substantially lowered the price without losing the commodity; or, if such speculation is felt to be beyond the scope of history, whether it did in fact develop in such a manner outside the central tradition examined so far.

Between the extremes of violently overrunning civilisation in the style of the Mongols and peacefully permeating it in the style of the Christians, there is the usual experience of more or less laborious conquest. On the whole the Hagarenes found it no more laborious to overrun civilisation than did the Mongols, and when they did the effect was largely lost on barbarians: no civilisation stood to gain from the difficulties which the Arabs experienced in subduing North Africa or the Caucasus. There was, however, one significant exception. Eastern Iran had both well-entrenched principalities and a well-entrenched civilisation; and when the Hagarenes encountered these principalities, and for once in their history of effortless conquest found themselves constrained to make concessions to a local power structure, they unsurprisingly found that they had to come to some sort of terms with the civilisation it represented as well. The population of eastern Iran was not dragged to Paradise in chains,[1] they entered it as allies,[2] and as a result they had some say in the choice of itinerary.

Historically, the survival of an Iranian order of society with an Islamic blessing does much to explain why it was the outlying lands of the frontier and not metropolitan Fârs which played the leading role in the Iranian resurgence. Nobles and priests though they might be among their own people, the elite of western Iran were in no position to bargain with the conquerors for a status above the common run of client converts; and

whether they chose to live by their heritage in isolation from the conquerors, or to renounce it for a life in common with them, the heritage itself was doomed. Only in Khurāsān and Transoxania did the syncretic terms of trade tip in favour of the converts, and it was accordingly here that the *mages islamisés* in the shape of the syncretic prophets and the *aristocrates islamisés* in the shape of the successor dynasties could contribute to an Islamicised Iran which endured after both had lost out to rabbis and *mamlūks*.[3] The survival of an Iranian order of society likewise does much to explain the role of eastern Iran as one of the last strongholds of Hellenic epistemology. If Greek concepts are exportable to any elite, there were in practice by the eleventh century few elites left to import them: it is from this point of view entirely appropriate that it was in Chorasmia that the Stoicising Bīrūnī compiled his erudite yet emotive record of the traces of the past.

Conceptually, eastern Iran affords a glimpse of what might have been: an Islam which had abandoned its fixation on the desert to sanctify cities, aristocracies and concepts, and given up its fixation on the Arabs to make room for a non-Arab identity. Had the conquered peoples elsewhere been similarly able to retard the tempo of Arab conquest, they might presumably have succeeded in obtaining similarly favourable bargains; but conversely, their failure to do so made it inevitable that eastern Iran should sooner or later be reduced to the same predicament.

The second respect in which Islamic civilisation was arguably more expensive than it need have been was its Judaic values. In this case the historically relevant alternatives can be taken as the patterns of the three religions which had contributed singificantly to the shaping of Hagarism: Judaism, Christianity and Samaritanism. Clearly the notion of a secondary evolution taking Hagarism closer to either Judaism or Christianity has little to offer in the present context. Specifically, neither Khārijism nor Ṣūfism suggest plausible instruments for the remaking of civilisation. The first was too puritan, the second too permissive, to grapple with the heritage of antiquity in a formative manner. The fate of Khārijism was appropriately to live out its 'life apart' beyond the frontiers of the civilised world;[4] while the role of Ṣūfism appropriately went no further than softening the edges of a civilisation brought into existence under a very different aegis.[5]

The Samaritan pattern is more interesting. The tone of Samaritanism is set by the dominance of a learned but genealogically constituted priesthood which at the same time wields such political authority as exists within the community.[6] We have seen how this pattern was adopted into Islam, and it is quite conceivable that it could in fact have prevailed there: the

messianic legacy of the Judean desert did not in itself commit the Hagarenes to the rabbinic legacy of Babylonia.

Now priestly and rabbinical cultures differ in two key respects. In the first place, the status of a priest is primarily a matter of genealogical ascription, that of a rabbi is largely achieved by learning. A priest is therefore in a position to take some risks with his learning: he does not thereby compromise his genealogy. But a rabbi who tampers with the tradition of the fathers undermines the basis of his identity as a rabbi. In the second place, this difference in the role of learning tends to be matched by a difference in form. The backbone of rabbinical learning is the exoteric letter of an all-embracing religious law; the key-note of priestly learning easily becomes the esoteric discretion of a cultural elite.

This syncretic potential does not seem to have been much exploited by the Samaritans themselves. Historically, however, the contrast between the priestliness of the Samaritans and the rabbinicism of the Jews reflects a polarisation that had taken place in Hellenistic Judea several centuries before; and in the mutual hostility of the Sadducees and the Pharisees, the very different syncretic potentials of the two forms of religious authority are very much in evidence. In this context, of course, the issue was the reception of the prevailing civilisation, not the creation of a new one: the Jews were no conquerors. But suppose that in the aftermath of the Hagarene conquests it had been a Sadducee rather than a Pharisaic Islam that had presided over the ensuing cultural interaction. Could such a constellation in principle have issued in a new civilisation better integrated than the one that actually emerged?

In the first place, there can be little doubt that a Sadducee Islam could have provided more comfortable niches for the residual identities of the conquered peoples. In one way, of course, priestly genealogy went directly against this. Whereas the Khārijite rejection of sacred genealogy as such opened all religious roles to the non-Arabs, the Shī'ite commitment to 'Alid descent necessarily reserved the key roles to the Prophet's own ethnicity. There is thus nothing inappropriate in the streak of *Jāhilī* pride which runs through a certain style of Shī'ite literature.[7] But more substantially, the restriction of sacred genealogy to the priesthood emptied the ethnicity of the laity of religious significance, and the priestly license with which the holy family was endowed facilitated the manipulation of this ethnic neutrality. So that however impressive the Khārijite *tour de force* in legitimating the rule of a Persian high-priest over a Berber laity, in practice the non-Arabs stood to fare equally well by casting in their lot with an Arab priesthood.

So on the Shī'ite side, we have appropriate general protestations of the irrelevance of Arab ethnicity;[8] and on the gentile side, a string of non-

Arab peoples toying with the attractions of Shī'ism. In part, this ethnic role of Shī'ism merely replicates that of Khārijism. That is to say, it provided a form of Islam more accommodating towards the identities of peoples with no civilisation to lose – Berbers, Turks, Albanians.[9] But much more significant than this is the willingness to perpetuate something more than mere ethnicity which appears incompletely in the relationship which developed between Shī'ism and the Iranians. Even in the most Sadducee of all possible world, there would doubtless have been limits to the possibilities for such a *rapprochement*;[10] and in a world in which Sunnism shaped the criteria of what was and was not a respectable heresy, these limits were, as we have seen, extremely constricting. But if it is a historical accident that Iran ended up as a Shī'ite country, it is an unusually felicitous one.

In the second place, the question is whether a Sadducee Islam could have legitimated the formation of an Islamic civilisation in which the heritage of anitquity formed part of an integrated cultural substructure, dominated by the Islamic architectonic without being denatured by it. Could there have been an Islamic polity in which the practice of civilised government was harmonised with the theory of sacred government,[11] an Islamic culture in which the literary heritage of Arabia was at ease with the conceptual heritage of Greece, an Islamic universe in which the sovereignty of a personal God was coordinated with the regularity of impersonal science? Again, the materials which the actual course of history contributes to an answer are at once fragmentary and suggestive.

Two historical phenomena are worth attention in this context. First, there is the relationship of the two great priestly dynasties of early Islamic history to the heritages of the peoples they had conquered.[12] On the Umayyad side, the primary evidence is archeological. The ruins of Umayyad Syria convey a sense of cultural poise amid the artistic and architectural riches of the ancient world such as the rabbis of Babylonia could never attain:[13] the gymnasium built by the Sadducee high priest Jason in his attempt to turn Jerusalem into a Greek city finds its last echo in the gymnasts that adorn the Umayyad palace at Quṣayr 'Amra. On the 'Abbāsid side, we have the well-known but otherwise puzzling cultural nerve of the early caliphs, to which the syncretic flexibility of the high-priesthood can be seen as providing the conceptual key. If the early 'Abbāsids set themselves up as Rāfiḍī imams,[14] it was presumably because only in that capacity could they legitimate the Persian monarchic tradition without losing their inherent Islamic sanctity. Similarly, it was by conflating the imamate with mahdism that they could shape an intrinsically Islamic aristocracy, partly by using participation in the apocalyptic event commemorated in their names[15] as the charter of a service aristocracy in

succession to that of the tribes,[16] and partly through the exercise of their own priestly discretion as in the liberal sanctification of the Persian aristocracy of eastern Iran.[17] Finally, it was by conflating the imamate with Greek epistemology that they could sponsor a conceptual theology to delete the letter of the law, and apply their own reason where a Mu'tazilite law had deleted Prophetic tradition.[18] With sacred reason, in short, they could soften the rigours of sacred tribalism and ease the reception of Shu'ūbī civilisation.

The other historical phenomenon of interest here is the relative receptivity to Greek concepts displayed by Shī'ism.[19] On the one hand there is the penchant of moderate Shī'ism for Mu'tazilism: witness the partial incorporation of Mu'tazilism into Imāmism and its integral survival in Zaydism.[20] And on the other there is the more full-blooded Philhellenism that appears among the Ismā'īlīs: witness the reception of a Neoplatonic philosophy into eastern Ismā'īlism,[21] and the striking astrological syncretism of the *Epistles of the Brethren of Purity*.[22]

We can also see in action in Shī'ism something of the mechanics, social and intellectual, of Sadducee Islam. In social terms Shī'ism and Hellenism – in contrast to Sunnī Islam – share a fundamental dichotomy between *khāṣṣa* and *'āmma*: the 'Alid priesthood as against the laity in the Shī'ite case,[23] the philosophical elite as against the masses in the Hellenic. What was at issue in the relations between Shī'ism and Hellenism was thus the merging of two elitisms, and it is only appropriate that both should have lost out to the rabbinical Islam of the *'āmma*.[24] In intellectual terms this social symmetry provided the basis on which the two sides could do business. On the one hand Hellenism could provide arcane intellectual stuffing for the esoteric pretensions of the 'Alid priesthood: concepts and astrology to eke out the name of God and the calendar. And on the other, the esoteric wisdom of the priests could be used as a sort of blank cheque to legitimate the reception of what was in fact the wisdom of the Greeks: the Hellenic borrowings of the Shī'ites were characteristically sanctioned by attribution to the family of the Prophet.[25]

There is thus a certain basis for supposing that a better integrated Islamic civilisation might have taken shape under the aegis of a Sadducee Islam. *A priori*, a priesthood on the Samaritan model was in a position to combine a cultural receptivity absent from the Judaic pattern with a power of remoulding absent from the Christian pattern. *A posteriori*, history affords fleeting but suggestive glimpses of the style in which a Sadducee Islam might actually have handled the identities and truths of antiquity. Together, these points establish a certain plausibility for our hypothetical world.

But in the real world it was a Pharisaic Islam that oversaw the formation

of Islamic civilisation, and there is good historical reason to suppose that it could not have been otherwise. In itself, of course, the failure of Ma'mūn against Ibn Ḥanbal shows only that the 'Abbāsid attempt was made too late, at a time when the rabbinic authority structure of Islam had manifestly set for good. But in fact the reasons why the 'Abbāsids not only failed, but had to fail, are bound up with the use which the Umayyads had made of the priesthood before them.

For the Umayyads the priesthood constituted the one resource they possessed for the completion of two distinct tasks, the elaboration of the Hagarene religious identity and the creation of a Hagarene civilisation. The circumstances they faced, however, conspired to make it almost impossible for them to use their priestly authority for both at once. In the elaboration of their religious identity the Umayyads had two precedents to follow, the Samaritan and the Christian. On the one hand they could choose the first, as they actually did, and employ their priestliness to effect a literalistic projection of their Judaic heritage onto an Arabian scenario. But unlike the Samaritans, they thereby turned themselves into priests in exile; and given the prominence of Babylonia among their conquests and of tribesmen among the conquerors, they were thereby running the risk of digging their own graves in favour of a collusion of tribes and rabbis which would issue in the rejection of civilisation. On the other hand they could have followed the Christian precedent, as in a sense the 'Abbāsids were to do, and sublimated their Judaic heritage into metaphor. But unlike the 'Abbāsids they were as yet in no position to take their religious identity for granted; and given the predominance of Christians among their subjects, they would have run the risk of being absorbed into Christianity and Christian civilisation. The only way the Umayyads could have ensured both the survival of the Hagarene religion and the *Fortleben* of the conquered civilisation would have been to establish a quite different relationship between themselves and the earlier monotheist faiths: one based not on literalistic projection or metaphorical sublimation, but on the wholely unprecedented expedient of outright nationalisation. Had the Hagarenes provided Jerusalem, the prophets and the scriptures with an Arab genealogy, instead of decking out Arabia with a Jerusalem, a Moses and a Torah, they would firmly and finally have superseded both Judaism and Christianity – instead of coexisting with them in an ambiguous conflation of parallelism and linear succession.[26] But that would have required a nerve which, in the last resort, not even 'Abd al-Malik possessed; and to the extent that the option was never real, it is not surprising that the Umayyads opted to learn from the Samaritans who had given them the priesthood itself. And the ultimate effect of this choice was to reduce the priesthood to a fossilised survival in a world whose living fauna were rabbinical. It

remains to add that the fate of priestliness was scarcely much happier in Shī'ism itself.

As the consolidation of hostile power rendered it increasingly unlikely that an 'Alid imamate could be established in the civilised world, the Shī'ites of Iraq responded in two very different directions. On the one hand the Imāmīs elected to remain where they were whatever the ideological cost, and set about adapting their originally activist heritage to the quietist imperatives of their environment. Generally, they sought to defuse their relationship to orthodox Islam by toning down[27] or concealing[28] the more offensive aspects of their heritage. Specifically, the right to initiate legitimate rebellion was first concentrated in a single line of reliably inactive imams,[29] and finally snuffed out altogether with the despatch of the imam into a virtually transcendental occlusion.[30] The politics of Imāmism were thus the restoration of the quietist politics of the ghetto.[31]

The Zaydīs, on the other hand, opted to pursue their political ambitions whatever the ecological cost. Generally, Zaydism is characterised by an irrepressible adventurism which contrasts at every point with the oppressive quietism of the Imāmīs.[32] Specifically, the ecological promiscuity of the early Zaydī adventurers contrasts with the strikingly restricted character of their lasting successes: when the dust had settled, the Zaydīs had swapped the urban ghettoes of Babylonia for the mountain tribes of the Caspian and the Yemen.[33] The Zaydī imamate had come to rest as the cornerstone of a style of tribal state formation founded ultimately in the consent which, in the absence of significant concentrations of power or wealth, sanctity alone can elicit.[34]

In these divergent developments the politics of Shī'ism had come completely in two. Both Imāmism and Zaydism were ultimately committed to the ideal of a real universal imamate. But where Imāmism had sacrificed the reality to preserve the universality of a shadow, Zaydism had sacrificed the universality as the cost of attaining a parochial reality;[35] and where Imāmism had remained a metropolitan heresy at the cost of renouncing practice, Zaydism had remained a practical heresy at the cost of renouncing the metropolis.[36]

The cultural implications of this political disintegration are easily spelled out. On the one hand, the Imāmī evolution led directly to the reabsorption of high-priestly authority into the rabbinical milieu of the ghetto. A pathetically unsuccessful conspiracy against the imams of error had ended as an ironically successful one against the imams of guidance; and the only significant residue of priestly authority now lay in the fact that the Imāmī rabbinate remained, so to speak, tannaitic, where that of the Sunnīs was merely amoraic. On the other hand, the Zaydī imamate had

become a seed which grew only upon stony ground. Zaydism had withdrawn from civilisation to live in symbiosis with barbarism, and 'better white than expert' seems a fair formulation of its doctrinal message and political record. The Zaydī imams in their mountain fastnesses retained an impressive commitment to learning;[37] but the contribution of their priestly authority to the shaping of civilisation was necessarily minimal. In sum, the Imāmīs abandoned their imamate and retreated into the ghetto, while the Zaydīs retained theirs and retreated to the backlands; but either way, the outcome smacked less of the cultural openness of the Sadducees than of the Pharisaic 'life apart'.

It was against this background that Shī'ism in its Ismā'īlī form made its last and in some ways its most impressive attempt to bring together sanctity and civilisation;[38] and its failure is a vivid testimony to the intractability of the dilemma. As an Islamic heresy, Ismā'īlism was constructed in unique organisational and ideological depth, at once ecologically plural[39] and doctrinally flexible.[40] Its capacity to hold the resulting tensions turned on the maintainance of a delicate balance which related a variety of local political services to a single overarching politico-religious idea: an imamic mahdism which promised the reality of the Zaydī imamate without its parochiality, and the universality of the Imāmī apocalypse without its political irrelevance.

In organisational terms, the key figure in this structure was the *dā'ī*, combining a local status in a parochial ecological niche with an instrumental role in a grander universal conspiracy.[41] In this balance lay both the distinctive strength and the distinctive vulnerability of Ismā'īlī organisation. On the one hand, we have here a dynamic attempt to transcend the static ecological adaptions of Imāmism and Zaydism: in the former, by contrast, there was no longer a figure on behalf of whom a local figure could conspire, while in the latter the imam himself was a local figure with a religiously terminal status. But on the other hand, the balance could easily be upset in either direction: by a short-circuiting whereby the *dā'ī* encashed the mahdist cheque on his own behalf,[42] or by the evaporation of the wider conspiracy in virtue of which his role possessed its ecumenical meaning.[43] The organisational elasticity of Ismā'īlism was thus poised between the threats of intractable rigidity on the one hand and indefinite distention on the other.

In ideological terms, the central conception of Ismā'īlism is an imminent mahdism generating a relationship between present and future that is both cognitively flexible and emotionally taut. Again the balance is precarious. If the mahdist cheque is cashed now, the future collapses into the present, and the poise gives way to the intrinsic meaninglessness of post-eschatological reality: 'Ubaydallāh al-Mahdī might have been

happier as a Zaydī imam. But if the cheque is never cashed, the recession of the mahdic future empties the present of political meaning, and the emotional tautness is lost: the learned eleventh-century *dā'ī* Kirmānī might have been happier as an Imāmī rabbi.[44] Or to put it slightly differently, the persuasiveness of Ismā'īlism turns on the power of its metaphors: but if, as in the early doctrine of the Druzes, the metaphors are precipitated into literal truth,[45] or if, as in the writings of Nāṣir-i Khusraw, they are diluted into mere mystification,[46] then the delicate balance of allusiveness and elusiveness is destroyed. For Ismā'īlis, like Marxists, have to dissimulate the fact that in the last resort they must choose between encashing their promise in a sordid Russian imamate and dishonouring it in an effete Parisian *galut*; and the grandeur of Ismā'īlism, like that of Marxism, lies in a vision the plausibility of which must sooner or later wear out.

The Nizārīs tried to escape from this trap by the old expedient of a new start. But it takes more than novelty to effect a renovation, and the shallow utopianism of the 'new preaching' is well indicated by the rapid onset of parochialisation and the parallel decay of philosophy into magic.[47] The outcome was in effect just another Zaydī imamate in the backlands, with the added encumbrance of an absurdly elaborate doctrinal heritage and the marginal asset of an Imāmī ghetto which owed its survival to its location on the periphery of the Islamic world. In the fullness of time the accidents of history brought the imamate to the ghetto: the high-priest ended up in British India as he had begun in Achaemenid Judea, the leader of a minor religious community vis-à-vis its distanly benevolent imperial rulers. And it was in this setting that Sadducee Islam achieved its most dramatic cultural success. The Aga Khans proclaimed the abrogation of the ghetto[48] and the reception of civilisation; if they preferred the turf to the gymnasium, they were nonetheless worthy heirs of the high priests of Hellenistic Judea. But whatever the triumphs of Sadducee Islam in this exotic and implausible setting, it had left the rest of the Islamic world to its own Pharisaic devices: 'even though we are Sadducees, yet we are afraid of the Pharisees'.[49]

14

THE AUSTERITY OF ISLAMIC HISTORY

Islamic history is marked by a striking narrowness and fixity of semantic resources. It was of course compounded from the same trio of classical, Hebraic and barbarian elements as was the history of Europe. But whereas in Europe the three sources remained distinct, Islam rejected the first and fused the other two; and as a result its resources are heavily concentrated in a single and specifically religious tradition. What this meant for the character of Islamic civilisation in relation to the cultures it succeeded we have already seen. It is however worth giving the analysis a certain emphasis by extending the comparison to include the very different history of Europe. For just as the single source of the Islamic tradition accounts for the austerely unitary character of so much of Islamic history, so also the plurality of sources of the culture of Europe is a precondition for its complex historical evolution. It was through the interaction of historically heterogeneous but culturally accredited traditions that the Europeans were afflicted with that unceasing quest for truths which prevented the harassed Faust from settling down in Gretchen's garden; while conversely the Muslims, having acquired the poise of certainty, were under no temptation to offer their souls to Mephistopheles for a glimpse of the final truth. While this contrast is so basic as to be almost a truism, it can be brought out with some precision by a comparison of the different effects of fundamentalism in the domains of truth and identity in the worlds of Europe and Islam.

Our starting point is a certain parallelism between the rise of Islam and the Protestant Reformation. In both east and west, the world of antiquity acquired a watered-down version of Judaism in the shape of Christianity. In both, this partial adoption of Judaic values *ipso facto* made available the project of taking these values more seriously. In both, the project found historical embodiment in movements which rejected a degenerate Christianity in something of the same terms: there is the same assertion of an intransigent monotheism against the polytheism or idolatry of latter-day Christians, the same excision of mystery from the moral relationship of men to their God,[1] the same denaturing of society and nature through the making over of the universe to the absolute sovereignty of the divine will.[2]

But beyond this point, east and west present a simple and basic contrast. In the east the turn towards a more thoroughgoing Hebraicism in the seventh century was an exogenous movement: the values of a Judaism which had remained spiritually outside eastern Christendom fused with the force of barbarians who had remained physically outside it. But in the west the failure of Gothic Arianism to anticipate the rise of Islam in the fourth century meant that it was no longer possible to restage it in the sixteenth: the Jews of course could still provide their quota of refugees, but the sixteenth-century Helvetians were no longer barbarians who could be enlisted to overthrow either Christianity or civilisation.[3]

The endogenous character of Protestantism – or to limit the discussion somewhat, of Calvinism – in contrast to Islam is crucial for its relationship to what went before it. The point applies at the levels of both ideas and realities. At the level of ideas a fundamentalist use of the Hebraic heritage of Christianity could of course provide a serviceable title to destroy.[4] But even for a religion whose scriptural canon embraced the Old and New Testaments, fundamentalism was hardly a sufficient resource with which to build the world anew. And in any case Christian fundamentalism is necessarily an edifice without a foundation: it was precisely by losing its foundations in metaphor that Christianity became a universal religion.[5] The fact that Calvinism could reach back to the Hebraic heritage only from within Christianity thus meant that its distinctive semantic resources were greatly impoverished in comparison to those of Islam. The militarist imagery of Calvinism which finds such concrete embodiment in the seventeenth-century Armies of God, the unceasing imagery of pilgrimage which finds such concrete enactment in the religious migrations to Geneva or Massachussetts, the recurrent yearning for an intrinsically religious political order, are so many forlorn intimations of the Islamic categories of *jihād*, *hijra* and *imāma*. But they could not be more than intimations: the Crusades were about the only precedent the Calvinists could adduce for their militarism,[6] the wanderings of Abraham could have no literal geographical meaning for a tradition in which 'Paradise is our native country',[7] and even the Old Testament role of the warning prophet assumed by so activist a saint as John Knox was parasitic on the existence of iniquitous monarchs for the prophet to warn.[8] Geneva might be Calvin's Medina, but Noyons was no Mecca; even in the American wilderness, the capacity of the saints to imagine a sacred polity seems terribly atrophied by Islamic standards.[9]

At the level of realities, the fact that Calvinism had perforce to subvert Europe from within rather than conquer it from without entailed an equally far-reaching acceptance of what went before it. It was not that the spread of Calvinism took place in the pacific manner of early Christianity: its

career was at least comparable in violence to that of early Islam. The point was that the military entrées of Calvinism lay primarily in civil war, not in conquest. Having conquered Iran, Islam could afford to pay scant attention to the norms of the Persian aristocracy; but without a profound appeal to the predicament of the French nobility, Calvinism in France would not even have stood a chance.[10] So Calvinism had of necessity to take as its starting point the political and cultural dispositions of Swiss burghers, French aristocrats, or English gentlemen; there was political adaption as well as ideological poverty in the fact that Calvinists set about the subversion of contemporary polities in the name of profane and parochial ancient constitutions.

If we turn from the contemporary politics of Europe to its ultimate cultural roots, the picture is essentially the same. Even in its Christian recension, the Hebraic heritage could still suggest the question what need the godly could have of civilisation if God himself was a barbarian. And this powerful solvent of allegiance to civilisation was occasionally applied in more extremist milieux: John Knox in the sixteenth century condemned the classical heritage because he saw value only in the 'perpetual repetition' of God's word,[11] John Webster in the seventeenth denounced clerical love of 'that humane learning which the plain people are destitute of'.[12] But by and large the impulse of Puritanism is not to reject the classical heritage in substance but rather to subject it to a superficial 'Calvinisation' in form. Thus Calvin himself took for granted the value of the political institutions of the pagan Greeks; he merely saved the face of his Judaic God by categorising these institutions as 'the most excellent gifts of the Divine Spirit'.[13] Likewise Increase Mather took for granted the rightness of the Greek cause at Marathon; he merely Christianised it by attributing it not to fortune in the manner of the pagan historians, but to the fact that the Grecians were 'secretly and invisibly animated by angels'.[14] If one cannot quite have the Greeks on the side of the angels, one can at least have the angels on the side of the Greeks; the Puritan devotion to the Hebraic God leads not to the disowning of Hellas but to its retrospective adoption by him.

This effect is particularly striking in the domain of philosophy. In principle the Calvinists might have used the restoration of unlimited divine sovereignty to destroy the conceptual heritage of the Greeks; and there is a strong odour of Hanbalism both in the general aversion of Calvinism towards any tendency to wade into deep theological waters[15] and in the specific accusation of Webster that the university men 'have drawn theology into a close and strict logical method, and thereby hedged in the free workings and manifestations of the Holy one of Israel'.[16] But in general the Puritan response to philosophy was not deep rejection but superficial

Calvinisation.

It was of course possible to effect this assimilation by creating a formal category of 'prophetic philosophy' analogous to that of 'Prophetic medicine' in Islam: hence the formally Christian 'Mosaic philosophy' with its substantively Hermetic content.[17] But the characteristically Calvinist solution was the invocation of the deity himself: instead of being dismissed as a form of human reason invented by the heathen Greeks, 'God's logic'[18] was exalted as a fragment of the divine will partially and inscrutably vouchsafed to them. The Calvinists did not of course make enthusiastic Aristotelians; but the Calvinist rejection of Aristotle issued not in Hanbalism but in Ramism,[19] in the development, that is, of a new logic which was by very strong association, if not quite intrinsically, Calvinist. So where Ibn Taymiyya, a stern unbending Hanbalite, wrote in Arabic to warn the true believers against the logic of the Greeks,[20] the no less godly Puritan missionary Eliot wrote in Algonquin to bring the knowledge of God's logic to the Amerindians.[21]

Thus in neither political nor cultural terms could Calvinism destroy what went before it.[22] This is not of course to say that Calvinism was in either respect conservative. But its endogenous character, its lack of any deeply distinctive *content* in terms of which to set itself apart, forced its revolutionary energies into a remarkable strenuousness of *style*: if in terms of the roles to be enacted there was nothing very new under the Calvinist sun, the novelty had perforce to reside in the distinctive godliness of the enactment. God had no choice but to love adverbs.[23] And since purity is a more demanding basis for a religious community than ethnicity, the Calvinists had to work for their identity in a way that the Muslims did not; so where a truth and a genealogy were enough for Muḥammad, Calvin had to generate an ideology and work ethic.

Now what there was for this strenuousness to operate on was the political and cultural resources of Renaissance Europe. For just as late medieval Europe was a world committed to a Hebraic God but only imperfectly assimilated to his image, so also it was a world committed to the concepts of the Greeks but only imperfectly assimilated to their logic. Being merely Christian, sixteenth-century Europe could still be shaken to its roots by a Reformation; but equally, being merely Christian, it could still have a Renaissance. Islam, by contrast, itself a new religion and a new civilisation, had neither. And since the values of modern politics and modern science were in fundamental ways the outcome of the interaction of Renaissance and Reformation, it follows that the conceptual mechanisms through which they were engendered were inconceivable in the Islamic world. For whereas in the east the tightening of the Hebraic meshes with the coming of

Islam tended to eliminate concepts altogether, in the west the tightening of the meshes with the rise of Calvinism had the effect of making them more pervasive than ever before.

In the case of the origins of radical politics, the point is worth making both historically and socially. Historically, the shared insistence of Islam and Calvinism on the immediate relationship of the believer to his God is a powerful solvent of the legitimacy of all intervening political structures. But whereas in Islam the force of this was to clear the world in favour of an arbitrary and illegitimate *sulṭān*, Calvinism neither could nor did give rise to a comparable ethical vacuum. Its destructive force was thus applied in favour of other political *values*: initially a fundamentalism of ancient constitutions,[24] ultimately a philosophy of futuristic concepts.[25] Socially, the shared insistence of Islam and Calvinism on the unitariness of the relationship of all believers to their God is a powerful solvent of the old Hellenic insulation of elite and masses in its etiolated Christian guise. But again the Islamic and Calvinist outcomes were in the long run diametrically opposed. The rise of Islam, confirmed in due course by the Sunnī revival, led to the spiritual conquest of the elite by an increasingly jealous God; but the rise of Calvinism, inverted in due course by secularisation, led to the intellectual conquest of the masses by increasingly intransigent concepts.[26] Where the Islamic rejection of the priesthood meant the collapse of the philosophers, the post-Calvinist secularisation of the priesthood of all believers meant that philosophers became fishers of men:[27] against the quietly obscurantist politics of the sultanate, we have the actively rationalist politics of revolution.[28] It is only in the remoteness of tribal Arabia, with its endemic religious activism, that the two histories of puritanism have come to display a certain measure of convergence. The theistic egalitarianism of the Khārijites of the medieval Ḥaḍramawt and the conceptual egalitarianism of their contemporary Maoist avatars do, after all, share the same doctrinaire hatred for the family of the Arabian Prophet.

In its cognitive aspect the contrast exhibits one of the necessary conditions for the development of modern science. Modern science rests on a tense relationship between the mad conclusions of speculative reason which allege that the earth is round, and the commonsense observations of human perception which show that it is obviously flat. The cultivation of speculative reasoning typically issues in a plurality of philosophical *madhhab*s, schools coexisting in diversity and thriving on the issue of indulgences to matter for its deplorably sublunar behaviour; while conversely empiricism tends to find its embodiment in *musnad*s, catalogues devoted to the mindless listing of mere particulars. Neither the one nor the other in itself amounts to science; to generate science the laws of heaven and earth have to merge.

Both the European and the Islamic worlds inherited the concept of immutable celestial laws from the Greeks, together with the main doctrines of the Hellenic philosophical schools. But since in Islam such a concept could be taken seriously only in heretical circles, the pursuit of speculative reasoning in a Muslim environment, however impressive by the standards of medieval Europe, had ultimately to fall short of the level achieved in the Renaissance. Face to face with a hostile orthodox world, the energies of the Muslim philosophers were preempted by the defence of the very notion that the universe is endowed with a *logos*; they were in no position to take the existence of this *logos* for granted and go on to search out the secret of its inner workings. On the one hand orthodox hostility induced the philosophers to patch up rather than exploit the differences between Plato and Aristotle in order to present a united front;[29] and on the other it produced an unmistakable tendency for philosophical doctrines to slither to the cognitive right: Epicureanism, such as it was, had already lost much of its materialist nerve to go Neoplatonic,[30] while Neoplatonism itself lost much of its speculative nerve to go occult.[31] Where the mathematicisation of the universe in the thought of Galileo marked the triumph of speculative reason in Europe, Islamic speculation in the mystical proportion of numbers marked the flight of reason to the esoteric wisdom of the imam.[32]

Conversely, both the European and Islamic worlds inherited from the Jews the notion that God is responsible for each of the particulars observable on earth.[33] But since Christianity had never taken the notion seriously on any scale, fundamentalism in a Christian environment, however impressive it might be by the standards of medieval Catholicism, had ultimately to do without the foundation it possessed in Islam. Calvin could of course insist that 'no wind ever rises or blows, but by the special command of God',[34] a rejection of the materialistic meteorology of the Milesians[35] as fundamental as any in Islam; but in practice he could no more delete the category of nature from the Christian universe than the Muslim philosophers could save it for theirs. Had the Protestants been able to operate exclusively with scripture, Calvin might have followed the Muslim fundamentalists in condeming 'he who would learn astronomy and other recondite arts' as an incipient unbeliever; but the Protestants having a book of nature alongside their book of God, the potential unbeliever had simply to 'go elsewhere'.[36] Conversely a Francis Bacon without the book of nature would have possessed exactly the combination of vast learning and mistrust of Aristotelian philosophy to make an Ibn Hazm harping on the vices of analogy as applied to God's words; but instead he 'went elsewhere' to harp on the virtues of induction as applied to God's works. Ultimately the Protestants had to adopt a dual occasionalism: they could abolish the

laws of grace, but they could only make the laws of nature more inscrutable.

Now it was precisely the taking over of a mathematical universe by Protestant empiricists which closed the cosmic meshes: mere facts could no longer slip through the net spread out by speculative reason. Henceforth esoteric reason and exoteric matter were to subscribe to the same scientific creed, and nature was to be catechised, or put to experimental torture, to force it to give empirical evidence against common sense.[37] So where the meeting of the Hellenic and Hebrew heritages in the east produced Islamic occasionalism, in the west it issued in European science. And this cognitive contrast has also its social analogue: where Muslim fundamentalism found its social embodiment in the lawyer merchant who resigns his will to God, uncertain of the universe but assured that the law leads to salvation,[38] the dual occasionalism of the Protestants led ultimately to a society which resigned the will of God to capitalists and experimental scientists. If Islam, thank God, has no need of logic whatever, Europe, thanks to science, had no need of God whatever.[39]

Islamic history thus precluded that tightening of the meshes whereby political concepts merged with economic realities to produce modern politics, and celestial concepts with earthly realities to produce modern science. But it equally precluded the compensatory widening of the meshes of identity wherein Europe sought relief from the discomforting narrowing of those of truth: Islam could not engender nationalism. It could not do so because Islam and nationalism represent different and mutually exlusive things a tradition can do with its barbarians. Europe had kept its classical culture, its Judaic God and its barbarian invaders conceptually distinct; and it was accordingly in a position to call upon its barbarian ancestors to provide the historical sanction for the existence of a plurality of nations within a shared community of truth. Gentiles to their Judaic faith and gentiles to their Graeco-Roman civilisation, the inhabitants of Germany were free to be Germans to themselves.[40] It was thus appropriately in the period in which the west was seeking to restore the pristine condition of its religion and culture that Europe north of the Alps set about refurbishing its barbarian genealogies.[41] But Islam in contrast had fused its barbarian invaders with both its religion and its culture:[42] on the one hand it sanctioned only one nation, the *umma*, and on the other it precluded the manipulation of non-Arab genealogies as legitimate titles to a distinct identity within this *umma*. The heterogeneity of the Muslim world was real enough; but it was not till the reception of nationalism from Europe that it became possible to construe this Islamic vice as a western virtue. So where Europe developed secular nationalism, Islam could generate only the religious nationalism of the Arabs and the irreligious Shu'ūbism of the gentiles.

Europe thus had three origins to return to, the Islamic world only one: to Reformation, Renaissance and nationalism, Islam can oppose only *Salafiyya*, the return to the unitary religion, culture and ethnicity of the righteous ancestors.[43] The interacting reactions of European history issued in a modernity which has engulfed the world; the unitary reaction of Islam in the Wahhābism of the inner Arabian wilderness.

In itself, of course, the lack of a plurality of origins is no bar to a rich diversity of cultural meanings: witness the historical depth of the normative Chinese past, or the qualitative range of the religious tradition of India.[44] But the Arabs did not take millennia to evolve a civilisation of their own in relative isolation from the rest of the world; and the conditions in which they went into action meant that Islamic civilisation attained a more or less definitive, and to a considerable degree negative, self-definition at an early stage in its belated history. To that extent Islamic history had but one thing to say, and had said it rather early in the day. Its single message was moreover in some ways a very discomforting one. The Hagarenes had made the mistake of conquering the world in the name of Judaic values. Having conquered the world, they could neither hope to be redeemed in it in the manner of the Jews, nor reject it outright to be saved in another in the manner of the Christians. And having conquered civilisation, they could neither assimilate it in the manner of the Christians nor insulate themselves against it in the manner of the Jews. Neither their redemption nor their civilisation could ever quite come to fruition.

Yet the appeal of Islam, its capacity to carry conviction in the lives of its innumerable adherents, is as real as, in the terms considered so far, it might seem puzzling. The appeal can of course to some extent be explained away. In the first place, the attraction of so uncomfortable a synthesis is in considerable measure to be explained in terms of one of the key forces which had brought it into being, the force of conquest. Initially the point is obvious, and subsequently also it was through conquest that a great deal of what is now the Islamic world was brought to Islam. But it would be naive to try to explain the continuing appeal of Islam as a world religion simply by the fact that, once set in motion, it was hard to stop. In the second place, it is historically of no small importance that Islam has preserved certain escapes from its own discomforts. The redemption which has aborted in orthodox Islam can still be pursued in the mahdism of the Shī'ites and the backlands; the civilisation which orthodox Islam has repressed can still be cultivated in the culturally more permissive milieux of Shī'ism and Ṣūfism. And at the same time the religious character of the Islamic polity, so ill-

represented in the tawdry realities of the Muslim state, has retained an intermittent vitality in the violent confrontation of Islam with the infidel. But again, the existence of escape routes from the oppressiveness of the Islamic tradition is hardly sufficient to account for its continued appeal.

The locus of this appeal must to some extent lie in an area which has so far evaded the concerns of this book: the world of men in their families. This is of course an aspect of human life which any religion, other than one of total renunciation, must make some sense of; and Christianity and Judaism are no exceptions. And yet the meaning they can infuse into this domain is in each case a significantly relative one. In Christianity, the familial present is emptied of religious meaning by the hope of future salvation, and the pervasiveness of sin which gives that salvation its anxiously precarious quality renders all familial life necessarily and radically corrupt. It is characteristic of Christianity to have founded its religious institutions in the premiss of the corruptness of marriage. In Judaism these effects are far less pronounced, but they are still detectable: on the one hand the religious meaning of the familial present is relativised by the hope of national redemption in the future, and on the other hand it is undermined by the austerity of a law that is incapable of full execution in ordinary life. If the appropriate traditional fate of the Christian girl was the nunnery, the appropriate modern fate of the Jewish girl is the Israeli army. In both Christianity and Judaism, the means of grace are too uncertain or exacting, and the hope of glory too vivid, to make it possible for the life of the family to constitute an absolute domain of the sacred in this world.

The Muslims by contrast have neither the Jewish hope of redemption in this world nor the anxiety of the Christians over their prospects of salvation in the next; and the yoke of their law is one which, at the level of the family, men can actually bear.[45] So while the Jews live out the indignity of refugees awaiting repatriation, and Christians engage in their undignified scramble for salvation, Islam can at least make available to the Muslims in their families a resigned and dignified calm. Ibn Ḥanbal would not have climbed a palm tree after a pretty girl in the manner of Rabbi Akiva; but neither did he need to climb a pillar in pursuit of God in the manner of St Simeon Stylites. The resulting emotional repertoire of Islamic culture was a decidedly unromantic one. There are no parallels in Islam to the emotive potentialities which make it possible to find in Marxism a secularisation of messianic Judaism and in Freudianism a secularisation of Protestant Christianity; the only obverse to the *gravitas* of the Muslims is the giggling of their womenfolk. But the compensation is very real, and has meaning for the everyday lives of ordinary men. The public order of Islamic

society collapsed long ago; but the take-over of family life by slave-girls was by no means as far-reaching as the takeover of public life by *mamlūk*s. The sanctity which had fled the public domain thus found security in its private refuge: the Muslim mosque points across the desert to Mecca, but the Muslim house contains its *qibla* within itself. It is perhaps the last residue of the Islamic conquests that the Muslims can at least be at home in their own homes.

APPENDIX II: *LEX FUFIA CANINIA* AND THE MUSLIM LAW OF BEQUESTS

Lex Fufia Caninia was enacted in the reign of Augustus to restrict the mass manumissions by bequest in which Roman slave owners had indulged by way of self-glorification. It stipulated that the owner of up to two slaves could free both, of two to ten one half, of ten to thirty one third, of thirty to a hundred one fourth, and of a hundred to five hundred one fifth. Under no circumstances were the slaves so freed to exceed one hundred. They had to be named and would be freed in order of priority if the testator had exceeded the legal limit. The law was repealed by Justinian. (Gaius, *Institutiones*, i:42f; Ulpian, *Liber regularum*, i:24f; Iulius Paulus, *Sententiae*, iv:15; *Corpus iuris civilis*, *Codex*, vii:3, cf. *Institutiones*, i:7. For other details see W. W. Buckland, *The Roman Law of Slavery*, Cambridge 1908, pp. 546f.)

The law appears in the fifth-century Syro-Roman lawbook, and whatever notice may have been taken of Justinian's contrary enactment in sixth-century Syria, it survived in the Middle East when in due course the fifth-century code became the standard source of Christian civil law. All recensions published so far quote the law correctly, though all omit the case of a hundred to five hundred slaves as well as some other details. All pay an unprecedented attention to the case of three slaves and note that two may be freed, evidently to establish the point that when arithmetic decrees the freeing of half a slave the law is to be interpreted liberally (K. G. Bruns and E. Sachau (ed. and tr.), *Syrisch-römisches Rechtsbuch aus dem fünften Jahrhundert*, Leipzig 1880, L§4, P§24, Ar§22, Arm§24; Sachau, *Syrische Rechtsbücher*, vol. i, RI:14f, RII:22, RIII:4; new manuscripts have been discovered but not yet edited, cf. A. Vööbus, 'Important Manuscript Discoveries for the Syro-Roman Law Book', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 1973, pp. 321ff).

But if we turn to the Christians of Persia, it is a much etiolated version of the law that we find in the *Corpus iuris* of Isho'bokht, compiled probably about A.D. 775 (Sachau, *Syrische Rechtsbücher*, vol. iii, p. ix). According to Isho'bokht, 'it is written thus in the law of the Romans about male and female slaves: "a man may manumit a third of his slaves"; but he may not manumit the portions falling to his wife and sons [*sc.* children] because one third belongs to him, another to his wife and another to his sons' (*ibid.*, p. 177).

Three things have happened to the law on export to the Nestorians. In the first place, the complex gradations have given way to a hard and fast rule that only a third may be freed, presumably by inversion of the case which receives most attention in the Syro-Roman original. (For the influence of the Syro-Roman lawbook on

Isho'bokht see *ibid.*, p. xi.) In the second place, the law has received a completely new rationale which, as noted by Sachau (*ibid.*, p. 334), cannot be Roman. It is almost certainly Zoroastrian: Zoroastrian law placed restrictions on testamentary dispositions in the interest of the heirs, and prohibited gifts in death sickness outright ('The Dâdistân-î Dînîk', tr. West, chapter 54, in *Pahlavi Texts*, part two, pp. 183ff; only payments of debts, maintenance and certain types of charity are permitted in death sickness). Isho'bokht has of course completely omitted reference to bequests; but on the one hand Roman law placed no restrictions on manumission *inter vivos*, and on the other Zoroastrian law placed no restrictions on gifts during health (*ibid.*, p. 184), so that there can be no doubt that it is manumission in death sickness or by bequest that Isho'bokht has in mind. Finally, Isho'bokht rejects the law not because Justinian has repealed it, a fact of which he is unaware, but because, without denying the rights of wife and children, he thinks that the father knows best what is in their interest (Sachau, *Syrische Rechtsbücher*, vol. iii, p. 177). The law which Isho'bokht describes is thus neither Roman, Persian nor Nestorian law, but nobody's law. Hence it was very easy to turn it into Muslim law.

Muslim law restricts both gifts in death sickness and legacies to a third of the net estate, and Schacht has dated this provision to the Umayyad period (*Origins*, pp. 201f; for a different view see N. J. Coulson, *A History of Islamic Law*, Edinburgh 1964, pp. 65ff). This is not straight Persian law: the Zoroastrians, as noted, prohibited gifts in death sickness altogether. Nor is it straight Roman law: the Romans did place restrictions on both legacies and *donationes mortis causa*, but the restrictions left a liberal right to dispose of three quarters of the net estate. Nor is it at all Jewish law: on the one hand the Jews did not know the testament, and where the Muslims restricted gifts to protect the scriptural heirs, the Jews had adopted gifts to circumvent their rights; and on the other hand, the Amoraim had decided that a gift in death sickness had by definition to dispose of the *entire* estate (R. Yaron, *Gifts in Contemplation of Death in Jewish and Roman Law*, Oxford 1960, pp. 85ff). That we have to do with Isho'bokht's non-law, or in other words with the Persian law of gifts and bequests conflated with the Roman law of manumission, is suggested above all by the fact that the classic tradition on which the Muslim law is based describes a case of manumission: it has a dying man manumit the six slaves who are his only property, whereupon the governor of Medina draws lots and sets free only two (Schacht, *Origins*, pp. 201f); and other traditions establishing the same point are all variations on the same theme of manumission. Now manumission does of course count as a gift or bequest, but it is by no means an obvious example to choose in illustration of a principle of succession. Moreover, Muslim lawyers devoted a quite disproportionate amount of energy to the question whether it was the drawing of lots or priority that was to determine what slaves were to be freed when the testator had exceeded the legal limit; disproportionate, that is, if they had not had their doubts as to whether it was the law of manumission or the law of succession that was involved. Both the figure of one third and the doubts find a ready explanation if we assume that the Muslims borrowed their law from the Nestorians. Isho'bokht's compilation is of course very late, but there is con-

versely no reason to think that he borrowed his non-law from the Muslims. In the first place, it is not surprising that Christians practising Roman law in Persia should mix up a Roman law restricting manumissions to protect the *ingenui* and a Persian law restricting bequests to protect the heirs; whereas despite the fact that the Roman law happened to involve testaments, there is no good reason why the Muslims should have got the two laws mixed up unless the confusion was one which they inherited. In the second place, Isho'bokht was clearly trying to codify customary law (cf. Sachau, *Syrische Rechtsbücher*, vol. iii, p. xi), and there is nothing to suggest that his substantive provisions are new. In the third place, he is quite explicit that his legal creation is Roman. And finally, there is not the slightest trace of Muslim influence elsewhere in his provisions.

This case provides a particularly apt illustration of the assistance which provincial etiolation accorded the Muslims thanks to the contrast that can be drawn with the Jews. The Jewish rabbis borrowed their law of gifts in contemplation of death from Greek and Graeco-Egyptian law; but neither had suffered an etiolation comparable to that undergone by Roman law among the Nestorians, and it took prolonged rabbinic sifting before the foreign borrowings had been completely transformed. The *matnat shekhiv mera'* can thus still be traced back via the *deyatiqi* to the Greek *diathēkē* (Yaron, *Gifts*, pp. 18ff, 46ff). But the Muslim rabbis borrowed a provincial hybrid, and thereby acquired what appears as a peculiar Arab treasure right from the start.

Two points are perhaps worth adding here about the relationship of Roman to Islamic law in general. The first is a methodological reservation. It is no secret that elements common to Roman and Islamic law tend to crop up in Jewish law as well (see for example Schacht, 'Droit byzantin et droit musulman', p. 202; the point is reinforced by the materials adduced in B. Cohen, *Jewish and Roman Law: A Comparative Study*, New York 1966, pp. 734–6). The tendency to treat such cases as instances of direct Roman influence on Islamic law is therefore somewhat arbitrary. Historically, of course, the roles of Jews and Nestorians in processing substantive Roman law for assimilation into Islam are more or less interchangeable. The second point is by way of buttressing our argument regarding the relationship of Islamic to Jewish jurisprudence (see above, pp. 30–2, 37f). There are certainly parallels here between Roman and Islamic conceptions (thus for custom abrogating law, see *Corpus iuris civilis*, *Digest*, i:3, 32); but the Islamic notions are much closer to the Jewish. Thus the 'unwritten law' of the Romans is a literal, not an epistemological category, and its substance is coterminous with custom (see H. F. Jolowicz and B. Nicholas, *Historical Introduction to the Study of Roman Law*[3], Cambridge 1972, p. 353); the Jewish and Muslim sense that the tradition of the jurists is an intrinsically oral one, and the consequent misgivings about committing it to writing, have thus no Roman equivalent. Likewise the closest Roman parallels to the *ijmā'* of the scholars (cf. above, p. 180, n. 11, where the term *opinio prudentium* seems to be a coinage of Goldziher's) represent the imposition of imperial decision-procedures, not principles of the jurists themselves (*ibid.*, pp. 362, 452).

NOTES

Where page references are given in the form 'pp. 12 = 37', the first figure refers to the original text and the second to the translation.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 1

1. This position is already implicit in the approaches which characterise Goldziher's critique of the authenticity of *ḥadīth* and Schacht's investigation of the origins of Islamic law. Incidentally, Schacht's reconstruction of the earliest form of Muslim historiography is confirmed by the earliest extant historical papyrus fragment (see his note in *Arabica* 1969 and below, p. 160, n. 56).

2. N. Bonwetsch (ed.), *Doctrina Iacobi nuper baptizati*, in *Abhandlungen der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen*, Philologisch-historische Klasse, n.s., vol. xii, Berlin 1910.

3. See F. Nau, 'La Didascalie de Jacob', in R. Graffin and F. Nau (eds.), *Patrologia Orientalis*, Paris 1903– , vol. viii, pp. 715f. The lack of hindsight in respect of the outcome of the Arab invasion would suggest that Nau's date of 640 is certainly too late.

4. *Doctrina*, pp. 86f.

5. See A. J. Wensinck *et al.*, *Concordance et indices de la tradition musulmane*, Leyden 1933–69, s.v. *miftāḥ*, where the key(s) of paradise are prayer and the *shahāda*.

6. 'I anathematise the secret doctrine of the Saracens and promise of Mōamed that he would become the gatekeeper (*kleidoukhos*) of paradise . . .' (E. Montet, 'Un rituel d'abjuration des Musulmans dans l'église grecque', *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 1906, p. 151). The oath seems to be a ninth-century compilation of heterogeneous materials.

7. The earliest confirmation is that of the 'Continuatio Byzantia Arabica', which preserves in Latin translation a Syrian chronicle dating from early in the reign of Hishām (see below, p. 179, n. 9) and presumably of Melchite or Jacobite origin: according to this source, the Saracens invaded the provinces of Syria, Arabia and Mesopotamia while under the rule of Mahmet (T. Mommsen (ed.), *Chronica Minora*, vol. ii (= Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Auctores Antiquissimi, vol. xi), Berlin 1894, p. 337). Otherwise the most important testimony on the Jacobite side is the archaic account of the origins of Islam preserved by Michael the Syrian (J.-B. Chabot (ed. and tr.), *Chronique de Michel le Syrien*,

Paris 1899–1910, vol. iv, p. 405 = vol. ii, pp. 403f); to this may be added an anonymous Syriac chronicle of the later eighth century (I. Guidi *et al.*, *Chronica Minora* (= Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium, Scriptores Syri, third series, vol. iv), Louvain 1903–7, pp. 348 = 274). On the Nestorian side the belated witness of the Arabic Chronicle of Si'ird is explicit (A. Scher (ed. and tr.), *Histoire nestorienne*, part two, in *Patrologia Orientalis*, vol. xiii, p. 601), while a Syriac chronicle probably written in Khūzistān in the 670s suggestively slips in a mention of Muḥammad as the ruler of the Arabs in the middle of an account of the conquests (*Chronica Minora*, pp. 30 = 26; the dating is that of T. Nöldeke, 'Die von Guidi herausgegebene syrische Chronik', *Sitzungsberichte der philologisch-historischen Classe der Kaiserlichen. Akademie der Wissenschaften*, vol. cxxviii, Vienna 1893, pp. 2f). On the Samaritan side we have the testimony of a medieval Arabic recension of the tradition (E. Vilmar (ed.), *Abulfathi Annales Samaritani*, Gotha 1865, p. 180). The convergence is impressive.

8. See above, p. 24.

9. It also finds a confused reflection in the prominence in Theophanes' account of the beginnings of Islam of Jews who take Muḥammad to be their expected Christ (*Chronographia*, A.M. 6122).

10. For the Hebrew text, see A. Jellinek, *Bet ha-Midrasch*, Leipzig 1855, vol. iii, pp. 78–82; for a discussion and partial translation, B. Lewis, 'An Apocalyptic Vision of Islamic History', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 1950.

11. Lewis, 'Apocalyptic Vision', p. 323.

12. Lewis, 'Apocalyptic Vision', pp. 321f, with commentary at pp. 322–4. We have slightly modified the translation.

13. The reference is to Is. 21:7: 'And he saw a troop with a pair of horsemen, a troop of asses, and a troop of camels.' The dislocation of the sense in the rest of the passage disappears once it is realised that the original author of the apocalypse was working from the Targum, not from the Hebrew as in the text as we now have it. Where the Hebrew speaks of 'a pair of horsemen, a troop of asses, a troop of camels', the Targum has 'a pair of horsemen, one riding on an ass, one riding on a camel'. This suggests that the original of this passage of the 'Secrets' was in Aramaic.

14. *Sc.* the prophet, the rider on the ass being of course the messiah.

15. See above, pp. 35–7.

16. Hebrew text in L. Ginzberg, *Geniza Studies in memory of Doctor Solomon Schechter*, vol. i, New York 1928, pp. 310–12; discussion and translation in B. Lewis, 'On that day: A Jewish apocalyptic poem on the Arab conquests', in P. Salmon (ed.), *Mélanges d'Islamologie*, Leyden 1974. Here the role of the Arabs in the overthrow of Roman rule (*ibid.*, p. 199) is quite distinct from the properly messianic events (p. 200).

17. See H. Gressmann, *Der Messias*, Göttingen 1929, pp. 449ff, with reference to the Jerusalem Talmud and parallel versions. Compare also the habit of Elijah

(whose role the prophet of the *Doctrina* is playing) of appearing in the guise of a desert Arab (*The Jewish Encyclopedia*[3], New York and London 1925, art. 'Elijah').

18. His historicity is not in doubt: he is clearly the king of the Ishmaelites who presides over the conquest of Egypt and other territories in the early Armenian chronicle of Sebeos (F. Macler (tr.), *Histoire d'Héraclius par l'Evêque Sebêos*, Paris 1904, p. 101; for the Armenian original, see below, p. 156, n. 30, and for the date of the chronicle, below, p. 157, n. 36). His name is however given as Amr: either Sebeos (and other Christian sources) conflated 'Umar and 'Amr (b. al-'Āṣ), or, conceivably, they were dissimilated within the Islamic tradition.

19. Cf. J. Levy, *Neuhebräisches und chaldäisches Wörterbuch über die Talmudim und Midraschim*, Leipzig 1876–89, *s.v. paroqa*. But 'Umar is never designated *masīḥ* (except in a curious reference to him as *fārūq-i mesīḥ* in the *Naṣā'iḥ al-wuzarā'* of Sarī Meḥmed Pasha, ed. W. L. Wright, *Ottoman Statecraft*, Princeton, N. J. 1935, text, p. 53).

20. Cf. also Sayf's tradition that 'Umar on his fourth visit to Syria entered it riding on an ass (Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh al-rusul wa'l-mulūk*, ed. M. J. de Goeje *et al.*, Leyden 1879–1901, series I, p. 2401).

21. The passage on 'the second king who arises from Ishmael' (Lewis, 'Apocalyptic Vision', pp. 324f) begins by stating that he 'will be a lover of Israel; he restores their breaches and the breaches of the temple'. This certainly suggests an earlier if slightly edited reference to 'Umar. The continuation however becomes less appropriate to 'Umar (cf. *ibid.*, p. 328), suggesting a dislocation of the historical structure of the apocalypse at this point. For the Arabs on the Temple Mount, see also above, p. 10.

22. Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, I, pp. 2728f; Muḥammad ibn Sa'd, *Kitāb al-ṭabaqat al-kabīr*, ed. E. Sachau *et al.*, Leyden 1904–21, vol. iii, pp. 193f.

23. For the Damascene Jew who hails 'Umar as the *fārūq* who will take Jerusalem see Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, I, p. 2403. For the Jewish messianic prophecy of the coming of the *fārūq* which Ka'b al-Aḥbār applies to 'Umar in Jerusalem, *ibid.*, p. 2409. Cf. also the messianic flavour of Ka'b's assertion that 'Umar was described in the Torah as an iron horn (M. J. Kister, 'Ḥaddithū 'an banī isrā'īla wa-lā ḥaraja', *Israel Oriental Studies* 1972, p. 223).

24. Even on the site of the temple, he insists on the unambiguous affirmation of the Islamic *qibla* (Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, I, p. 2408; Abū 'Ubayd al-Qāsim b. Sallām, *Kitāb al-amwāl*, ed. M. K. Harās, Cairo 1968, no. 430). He renews the prohibition of Jewish residence in Jerusalem (Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, I, p. 2405), an act unattested in any early source and unlikely to be historical, and expels the Jews from Arabia (see above, p. 24). The point of the rather pointless tradition which makes 'Umar the progenitor of Islamic mahdism by virtue of his belief in the return of the Prophet (*ibid.*, pp. 1815f) perhaps lay originally in the neatness with which 'Umar is made to deny his own messianic status.

25. Note particularly the reference to the rejoicing of the Jews (*Doctrina*, p. 86).

26. Note for instance the hostility towards the Ishmaelites that finds expression in the ninth-century *Pirkê de Rabbi Eliezer*, tr. G. Friedländer, London 1916, pp. 231, 350. But the most striking example of the change of attitude is plausibly provided by the passage in the 'Secrets' which follows immediately after the messianic interpretation quoted above: in contrast to the previous use of Is. 21:7 to present the Ishmaelites as the salvation of Israel, the fiscal and agricultural policies of the conquerors are now related to Dan. 11:39 and Ez. 4:13 respectively, with the result that the Ishmaelites are cast as the iniquitous oppressors of an exilic Israel. The impression that we have here a later attempt to neutralise the messianism of the preceding passage is reinforced by the abrupt change of authority which takes place: the messianic interpretation of Is. 21:7 is communicated to Rabbi Simon by Meṭaṭron in the course of an eschatological vision in a cave, whereas the more sober observations which follow are transmitted by him from Rabbi Ishmael, one of the leading rabbinic authorities of the previous generation. In the later 'Ten Kings', the vision in the cave is 'rabbinicised' along the same lines (Lewis, 'Apocalyptic Vision', pp. 321–3; the process is adumbrated in the Geniza fragment of the 'Secrets' referred to *ibid.*, p. 309n).

27. For Patriarch Sophronius of Jerusalem (634–8) the invaders are godless barbarians (see his synodical epistle of 634 in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Graeco-Latina*, Paris 1857–66, vol. lxxxvii, part three, col. 3197, and his Christmas sermon of the same year in H. Usener (ed.). 'Weihnachtspredigt des Sophronios', *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 1886, pp. 507, 514); in a sermon on baptism he gives a lurid catalogue of Saracen misdeeds (A. I. Papadopoulos-Kerameus, *Analekta Hierosolymitikês stakhyologias*, St Petersburg 1891–8, vol. v, pp. 167f). Maximus the Confessor in one of his epistles displays a similar attitude towards the uncouth barbarian invaders (*PG*, vol. xci, cols. 540f, dated to 634–40 in P. Sherwood, *An Annotated Date-List of the Works of Maximus the Confessor* (= Studia Anselmiana, fasc. xxx), Rome 1952, pp. 40f). Characteristically both interpret the invasion as a punishment for the sins of the Christians. Incidentally, the way in which Maximus speaks of the barbarians overrunning the land of others as though it were their own, and of the role of the Jews in the coming of Antichrist, suggests that he may have been aware of the irredentist and messianic character of the conquest; but the elevation of his style is such that this is unclear.

28. From the Copts, we have a savage reference to the Saracen invaders in a homily probably composed soon after the conquest (H. de Vis (ed. and tr.), *Homélies coptes de la Vaticane*, vol. ii (= Coptica, vol. v), Copenhagen 1929, pp. 62, 100); later in the century John of Nikiu states in his account of the conquest that the Muslim yoke was 'heavier than the yoke which had been laid on Israel by Pharaoh' (R. H. Charles (tr.), *The Chronicle of John, Bishop of Nikiu*, London 1916, p. 195). There is also a Coptic papyrus which refers to the sufferings of the Christians at the hands of the infidel Saracens and Blemmyes, who appear to have seized the churches (E. Revillout, 'Mémoire sur les Blemmyes', *Mémoires présentés par divers savants à l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres* 1874, pp. 402–4; Revillout dates the papyrus to the pre-Islamic period on rather weak

grounds). From the Nestorian side, we have the vague but catastrophic terms in which Sahdona, probably writing in the mid-seventh century, refers to what must be the Arab invasion (Martyrius (Sahdona), *Oeuvres spirituelles*, vol. i, ed. and tr. A. de Halleux (= CSCO, Scriptores Syri, vols. lxxxvif), Louvain 1960, pp. 40 = 41, and pp. vf of the introduction to the translation). Unfortunately we have nothing from Jacobite Syria earlier than the late seventh century; Jacob of Edessa regards the subjection of the Christians to the Arab yoke as a divine punishment, a bondage comparable to that of ancient Judah (*Scholia on passages of the Old Testament*, ed. and tr. G. Phillips, London 1864, pp. 27 = 42). The oppressiveness of the Ishmaelite yoke is of course a central theme of the late-seventh-century apocalypse of pseudo-Methodius (see below, p. 171, n. 7); but it is not clear whether it originated in a heretical or orthodox environment.

29. *Doctrina*, p. 88. (An eleventh-century Jewish source has it that there were Jews with the Ishmaelite invaders who showed them the site of the sanctuary and dwelt with them thereafter, see J. Mann, *The Jews in Egypt and in Palestine under the Fāṭimid Caliphs*, vol. i, Oxford 1920, p. 43.)

30. K'. R. Patkanean (ed.), *Patmout'iun Sebēosi Episkoposi i Herakln*, St Petersburg 1879, p. 111 = Sebeos, *Histoire*, p. 103. In the context 'governor' seems the most appropriate rendering of *ishkhan*.

31. *Doctrina*, p. 88.

32. H. Delahaye, 'Passio sanctorum sexaginta martyrum', *Analecta Bollandiana* 1904.

33. Sophronius' sermon on baptism, cited above, p. 155, n. 27. A Syriac chronicle of the early eighth century notes the slaughter of monks at the time of the conquest (*Chronica Minora*, pp. 148 = 114), while the Khūzistānī chronicle attests the killing of bishops and other ecclesiastical personnel (*ibid.*, pp. 37 = 30f). In Cyrenaica there is archaeological evidence of the deliberate destruction of churches by the conquerors (W. M. Widrig and R. Goodchild, 'The West Church at Apollonia in Cyrenaica', in *Papers of the British School at Rome* 1960, p. 71n). (It may be added that the late Chronicle of Si'ird states that the Arabs camping at Ḥīra on the eve of the battle of Qādisiyya horribly profaned the churches and convents (Scher, *Histoire nestorienne*, p. 627); this testimony stands out against the general insistence of the Nestorian tradition on the benevolence of Muḥammad and his successors towards their community, and may well be early.)

34. F. Nau (ed.), 'Le texte grec des récits du moine Anastase sur les saints pères de Sinaï', *Oriens Christianus* 1902, p. 82 = *id.* (tr.), 'Les récits inédits du moine Anastase', *Revue de l'Institut catholique de Paris* 1902, pp. 38f.

35. Sebeos, *Histoire*, pp. 139f; the date would seem to be 653 (*ibid.*, p. 132) rather than 651 (p. 139). Contrast the recognition of the messianic status of Jesus and the Docetic doctrine of the Crucifixion which characterise the Christology of the Koran. Note also that the Islamic tradition, despite its acceptance of Jesus as the messiah, persists in referring to his followers as 'Nazarenes', a usage presumably borrowed from the Jews.

36. Sebeos, *Histoire*, pp. 94–6. The chronicle ends in 661 and was clearly written by a contemporary; the question of its true authorship and title does not concern us. The account of the Arab conquests is stated to be based on testimony of eyewitnesses who had been held prisoner by the Arabs (p. 102).

37. The name already appears as *mwḥmd* in a contemporary Syriac note on the conquest of Syria (*Chronica Minora*, pp. 75 = 60).

38. Both prohibitions are Koranic, but only the first is halakhic. The wine tabu is attested by Diodorus Siculus (xix:94) for the Nabateans in the late fourth century B.C., but it is also a trait of ascetic Judaism (cf. the Rechabites, the Nazirites, and St John the Baptist), and one which appears suggestively as being adopted by many Jews against the wiser counsels of the rabbis in the period after the destruction of the temple (Babylonian Talmud, *Baba Batra*, f. 60b).

39. PERF 558 is dated in Greek by the indiction year corresponding to 643 and in Arabic in the form 'year twenty two' (A. Grohmann, 'Aperçu de papyrologie arabe', *Etudes de papyrologie* 1932, pp. 41f, 43; it seems clear from the plate that the Greek was written first). The dating 'year xvii' on the earliest Arab coins of Damascus presumably attests earlier use of the same era, but no corresponding Christian date is given (H. Lavoix, *Catalogue des monnaies musulmanes de la Bibliothèque nationale: Khalifes orientaux*, Paris 1887, nos. 1f). The presumption must be that this era marks the foundation of the polity, just as in the Islamic tradition. (It is worth noting that without PERF 558 early Islamic chronology would be very much at sea. Thus an era starting two or three years after that of 622 is suggested by the aberrant chronology of Sayf b. 'Umar and of certain Arab-Sasanian coins (for the latter, see A. D. Mordtmann, 'Zur Pehlevi-Münzkunde', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 1879, especially p. 97), and a figure of seven or eight (as opposed to ten) years for the rule of Muḥammad appears in the chronicle of Jacob of Edessa (*Chronica Minora*, pp. 326 = 250), in the eighth-century astrological history of Māshā'allāh (E. S. Kennedy and D. Pingree, *The Astrological History of Māshā'allāh*, Cambridge, Mass. 1971, p. 132), and is even cited by Maqrīzī (H. Lammens, 'L'âge de Mahomet et la chronologie de la Sîra', *Journal asiatique* 1911, p. 219; and cf. the aberrant figure of thirteen years cited from Balādhurī and others, *ibid.*, p. 215).)

40. A number of contemporary sources could be adduced to lend plausibility to such a reconstruction. Sebeos himself records the expulsion of the Jews from Jerusalem by the Persians (*Histoire*, p. 69), and in this he is confirmed by the Khūzistānī chronicle (*Chronica Minora*, pp. 26 = 23), as well as by later sources. A Christian saint fleeing from the Persian investiture of Jerusalem was several times in danger of capture by 'Saracens and Hebrews' [C. Houze (ed. and tr.)], 'Sancti Georgii Chozebitae confessoris et monachi vita', *Analecta Bollandiana* 1888, p. 134; note that flight into Arabia appears as a possible course of action, pp. 129, 133). A Jewish apocalypse attests what would be a parallel case of anti-Persian messianism in Palestine in 628 (I. Lévi, 'L'Apocalypse de Zorobabel et le roi de Perse Siroès', *Revue des études juives* 1914, pp. 135 = 151). But only late sources give any explicit indication that the movement was originally directed

against the Persians (Thomas Artsruni (tenth-century) interpolates a reference to the Persians into an account based on Sebeos, M. Brosset, *Collection d'historiens arméniens*, vol. i, St Petersburg 1874, p. 88; and there is a similar twist in the Armenian version of Michael the Syrian, V. Langlois (tr.), *Chronique de Michel le Grand*, Venice 1868, p. 223); Persian devastation of Arabia is however mentioned in a contemporary biography of St John the Almsgiver (E. Dawes and N. H. Baynes, *Three Byzantine Saints*, Oxford 1948, pp. 205f).

41. Muḥammad ibn Isḥāq, *Sīrat sayyidinā Muḥammad rasūli 'llāh*, ed. F. Wüstenfeld, Göttingen 1859f, pp. 342f = *id.*, *The Life of Muhammad*, tr. A. Guillaume, London 1955, p. 233; Abū 'Ubayd, *Kitāb al-amwāl*, no. 517. This feature of the document has been something of a puzzle, see for example J. Wellhausen, 'Muhammads Gemeindeordnung von Medina', in his *Skizzen und Vorarbeiten*, vol. iv, Berlin 1889, pp. 75f.

42. Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, vol. iv, p. 405 = vol. ii, pp. 403f. Contrast the more classical doctrinal survey which follows, in which the Ka'ba features prominently as the *qibla*.

43. Cf. above, p. 154, n. 24. A trace of the original Palestinian orientation survives in the Islamic tradition with Palestine disguised as Syria: there will be *junds* in Syria, Yemen and Iraq, but the Prophet recommended Syria as the land chosen by God for the elect of his servants (Abū Dāwūd Sulaymān b. al-Ash'ath al-Sijistānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ sunan al-muṣṭafā*, Cairo 1348, vol. i, p. 388; cf. Aḥmad b. Muḥammad ibn Ḥanbal, *al-Musnad*, Cairo 1313, vol. v. pp. 33f; 'Alī b. Ḥasan ibn 'Asākir, *Ta'rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, ed. S. Munajjid, vol. i, Damascus 1951, pp. 47–74).

44. This fantasy, already enacted by the Dead Sea sectarians, is well represented in rabbinic literature (see for example B. Mandelbaum (ed.), *Pesikta de Rav Kahana*, vol. i, New York 1962, pp. 92f, for an early attestation, and J. J. Slotki (tr.), *Midrash Rabbah: Numbers*, vol. i, London 1939, pp. 413f, for a parallel passage). It appears in two contemporary apocalypses (Lévi, 'L'Apocalypse de Zorobabel', pp. 135 note 28 = 151 note 7, 136f = 153; Lewis, 'On that day', p. 200), and again in a Syriac account of a Mesopotamian messianic pretender of the 730's (I.-B. Chabot (ed.), *Incerti auctoris Chronicon pseudo-Dionysianum vulgo dictum* (= CSCO, Scriptores Syri, vol. liii), Louvain 1933, pp. 173f = *id.* (tr.), *Chronique de Denys de Tell-Maḥré*, Paris 1895, pp. 26f).

45. Note the references to the wilderness of Pharan, 'Arebot Moab (Sebeos, *Histoire*, p. 96), Jericho (p. 98), and the desert of Sin (p. 101). The references to the twelve tribes of Israel also belong well with this context. But these Biblical twists may of course reflect nothing more than the literary taste of the chronicler, cf. his Ishmaelite ethnography.

46. It is a rabbinic principle that the last redeemer (i.e. the messiah) will be as the first (i.e. Moses), see for example Mandelbaum (ed.), *Pesikta de Rav Kahana*, p. 92. The parallelism between the two redemptions is of course older then the rabbis, cf. Is. 11:16. On a more practical note, compare the strongly Mosaic resonance of the fifth-century Cretan messianic pretender who led his followers

to the sea-shore in the expectation that the waves would part for their crossing to Palestine (Socrates Scholasticus, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, in *PG*, vol. lxvii, col. 825). The eighth-century pretender referred to above, p. 158, n. 44, actually claimed to be Moses himself returning to lead Israel out into the desert and restore them to the Promised Land.

47. A pale reflection of this notion can perhaps be detected in the tradition that when Muḍar [Ismā'īl] preferred Iraq to Syria, 'Umar wondered how they could have forgotten their Syrian ancestors (Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, I, pp. 2222f).

48. The idea of an Ishmaelite birthright to the Holy Land is discussed and rejected in *Genesis Rabbah* 61.7 and Babylonian Talmud, *Sanhedrin*, f. 91a. A charter for an Arab religion of Abraham (Ishmaelite and Keturid), including monotheism, circumcision according to the covenant, and some ethico-legal prescriptions, appears in Jubilees (R. H. Charles (tr.), *The Book of Jubilees*, London 1902, pp. 129–31).

49. M. van Berchem, *Matériaux pour un Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum*, part two, vol. ii, Cairo 1927, no. 217 (*islām* appears in no. 215).

50. The earliest numismatic attestation is of 768 (Lavoix, *Catalogue des monnaies musulmanes de la Bibliothèque nationale: Khalifes orientaux*, nos. 1554f: Mahdī as *walī 'ahd al-muslimīn*). The earliest appearance of the term in Syriac (*Mashlemane* in the sense of Muslims) that we have seen is in a chronicle of 775 (Chabot (ed.), *Chronicon pseudo-Dionysianum*, p. 195 = *id.* (tr.), *Chronique de Denys de Tell-Maḥré*, p. 46). The earliest example in a datable papyrus that we have come across is of 793 (PERF 624, see A. Grohmann, *From the World of Arabic Papyri*, Cairo 1952, pp. 132, 134). For an instance in a Christian Arabic papyrus (PSR 438) that could date from the middle of the eighth century, if the editor's reading of the text and estimation of its date are correct, see G. Graf, 'Christlich-arabische Texte', in F. Bilabel (ed.), *Veröffentlichungen aus den badischen Papyrus-Sammlungen*, vol. v, Heidelberg 1934, p. 10. In view of this sparse and belated attestation, it is hardly conceivable that the terms *islām* and *muslimūn* served as the primary designations of the faith and its adherents at the time of the conquests.

51. 'Magaritai': PERF 564 (A. Grohmann, 'Greek Papyri of the Early Islamic Period in the Collection of Archduke Rainer', *Etudes de papyrologie* 1957, pp. 28f); also PERF 558 of 643 (see above, p. 157, n. 39). 'Mahgre': Īšō'yahb III, *Liber Epistularum*, ed. and tr. R. Duval (= CSCO, Scriptores Syri, second series, vol. lxiv), Paris 1904f, pp. 97 = 73 (the letter was written while Isho'yahb was still a bishop; since he had already become a metropolitan before Maremmeh became Catholicus (*ibid.*, pp. 109 = 83), it should not be later than the mid-640s). 'Mahgraye' appears several times in an account of a religious disputation which probably took place in 644 (see above, p. 11): F. Nau, 'Un colloque du Patriarche Jean avec l'émir des Agaréens', *Journal asiatique* 1915, pp. 248, 251 = 257, 260f (cf. the form 'Mahgra' at pp. 252 = 262). The early appearance of the term as far afield as Egypt and Iraq is striking.

52. Though the Arabic vocalisation is not attested until the appearance of the

form 'Mōagaritai' in the papyri of Qurra b. Sharīk, governor of Egypt in 709–14 (H. I. Bell (ed.), *The Aphrodito Papyri* (= *Greek Papyri in the British Museum*, vol. iv), London 1910, nos. 1335, 1349, 1394 etc.).

53. But note how even in the language of the universalist 'fiscal rescript' attributed to 'Umar II, 'to migrate' is *hājara* in the case of the Arab, but *fāraqa* in that of the non-Arab (Abū Muḥammad 'Abdallāh ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *Sīrat 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz*, ed. Aḥmad 'Ubayd, Cairo 1927, pp. 94f).

54. Colophon dated year 63 of the era of the *Mahgraye bnay Ish[ma''il] bar Hagar bar Abraham* (W. Wright, *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts in the British Museum*, London 1870, p. 92).

55. This centrality of the notion of exodus may be compared with the way in which the Islamic tradition itself represents *hijra* as the religious duty which *islām* has replaced. Thus 'Ā'isha is made to say that the duty of *hijra* no longer obtains now that God has manifested *islām* (Abū 'Ubayd, *Kitāb al-amwāl*, no. 535; Muḥammad b. Ismā'īl al-Bukhārī, *Kitāb al-jāmi' al-ṣaḥīḥ*, ed. L. Krehl, Leyden 1862–1908, vol. iii, p. 35). The Prophet himself vouches for the supercession of *bay'a* on *hijra* by *bay'a* on *islām* (*ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 267f, and vol. iii, pp. 145f). The background to these traditions is a more general insistence on the abrogation of the duty of *hijra* (see for example Abū 'Ubayd, *Kitāb al-amwāl*, nos. 531–4; the last counters the denial of salvation to one who does not make the *hijra*).

56. The inner Arabian biography of the Prophet (Mecca, Quraysh and the battle of Badr, but with a slightly deviant chronology) is first attested in a papyrus of the late Umayyad period (A. Grohmann, *Arabic Papyri from Ḥirbet el-Mird*, Louvain 1963, no. 71). No seventh-century source identifies the Arab era as that of the *hijra*. The Arabic material (coins, papyri, inscriptions) consistently omits to name the era (the tombstone dated 'year twenty nine of the *hijra*' cited by Grohmann (*Arabische Chronologie*, Leyden/Köln 1966, p. 14) is known only from a late literary source). The Greek and Syriac material tells us whose era it was, usually referring to it as that of the Arabs; but the only clue to the nature of the event which constituted its starting-point is the dating of two Nestorian ecclesiastical documents of 676 and 680 by the year of 'the rule of the Arabs' (*shulṭana de-ṭayyaye*, J.-B. Chabot (ed. and tr.), *Synodicon Orientale ou Recueil de Synodes nestoriens* (= *Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, vol. xxxvii), Paris 1902, pp. 216 = 482, 227 = 490).

57. We are hardly to imagine that the slut who threatens to convert (*ahgar*) if denied the eucharist on account of her intercourse with the Mahgraye proposes to join the ranks of the Meccan Muhājirūn (C. Kayser (ed. and tr.), *Die Canones Jacobs von Edessa*, Leipzig 1886, pp. 13 = 39); compare also the case of Mu'āwiya's *mawlā* and fiscal agent 'Abdallāh b. Darrāj (Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā al-Balādhurī, *Kitāb ansāb al-ashraf*, vol. iv B, ed. M. Schloessinger, Jerusalem 1938, p. 123), who can be assumed to have been a non-Arab but is described as a 'Mahgraya' in a contemporary Syriac source (F. Nau, 'Notice historique sur le monastère de Qartamin', *Actes du XIV^e^ Congrès internationale des Orientalistes*,

part two, Paris 1907, pp. 95 = 84). Cf. the prophecy preserved in Christian Arabic in which the Coptic saint Samuel of Qalamun refers to the Arab invasion as the coming of 'this *umma* who are the *muhājirūn*' (R. Basset (ed. and tr.), 'Le Synaxaire arabe jacobite (Rédaction copte)', in *Patrologia Orientalis*, vol. iii, p. 408). (Whatever Coptic form is here rendered *muhājirūn* is likely also to underlie the curious use of *hijra* as a term for the Arab conquerors in the full version of Samuel's apocalypse (J. Ziadeh (ed. and tr.), 'L'Apocalypse de Samuel, supérieur de Deir el Qalamoun', *Revue de l'Orient chrétien* 1915–17, pp. 382, 389 *et passim*; note particularly the phrase *ummat al-hijra 'l-'arabiyya* at p. 377). The composition of this apocalypse is dated by Nau to the early eighth century (*ibid.*, p. 405), but is probably later).

58. Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *Sīrat 'Umar*, p. 95; Abū 'Ubayd, *Kitāb al-amwāl*, no. 547; compare also *ibid.*, no. 536; Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, I, p. 2775; Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā al-Balādhurī, *Kitāb futūḥ al-buldān*, ed. M. J. de Goeje, Leyden 1866, p. 382. Similarly the phrase *dār hijra* is applied to Kūfa (*ibid.*, p. 275, and Abū Ḥanīfa Aḥmad b. Dāwūd al-Dinawarī, *Kitāb al-akhbār al-ṭiwāl*, ed. V. Guirgass, Leyden 1888, p. 131) and to Tawwaj (*ibid.*, p. 141).

59. Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, vol. i, p. 388 (the Arabic is *alzamahum muhājar Ibrāhīm*). Cf. Koran 29:25.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 2

1. The 'Secrets', apart from what it has to say about the 'second king', seems to refer to the building of the Dome of the Rock as the repair of the Temple (so Lewis, 'Apocalyptic Vision', pp. 325, 327). Another Jewish apocalyptic fragment describes 'Abd al-Malik as building the Temple (I. Lévi, 'Une apocalypse judéo-arabe', *Revue des études juives* 1914, pp. 178f). Compare also the prophecy attributed to Shenouti – probably early but preserved only in Arabic – of the coming of the children of Ishmael and Esau(!), a remnant of whom would build the Temple in Jerusalem (E. Amélineau, *Monuments pour servir à l'histoire de l'Égypte chrétienne aux IV^e^ et V^e^ siècles* (= *Mémoires publiés par les membres de la Mission Archéologique Française au Caire*, vol. iv), Paris 1888, p. 341).

2. See above, p. 154, n. 21.

3. Sebeos, *Histoire*, pp. 102f. Compare the further statement of the 'Secrets' on the 'second king' that he 'builds a mosque (*hishtaḥawayah*) there on the temple rock' (Lewis, 'Apocalyptic Vision', pp. 324f), and the makeshift wooden structure seen by Arculf on the site of the Temple *c.* 670 ('Relatio de locis sanctis', in T. Tobler and A. Molinier (eds.), *Itinera Hierosolymitana et descriptiones Terrae Sanctae*, Geneva 1879f, p. 145).

4. Note that whereas the 'Secrets' is describing the actions of the 'second king', who seems at least to start as 'Umar, the account in Sebeos implies that the Hagarene ruler was not present in Jerusalem. The prophecy of the apocalyptic poem referred to above (p. 5) that Israel 'will no more be kept far from the house

of prayer' (Lewis, 'On that day', p. 199) would presumably, if historical, relate to the period before the break described by Sebeos.

5. The position of the account in Sebeos' narrative would imply a date of 641f. But whereas Sebeos has already mentioned the conquest of Egypt (*Histoire*, p. 98), John of Nikiu's reference to Jewish fear of the Muslims during the invasion would suggest that the break had taken place before the Arabs entered Egypt (*Chronicle*, p. 13).

6. The adoption of the era of 622, already plausibly attested for 638f (cf. above, p. 157, n. 39), points in the same direction. Messianists would have dated from the liberation of Zion.

7. See above, p. 17.

8. Īšō'yahb III, *Liber Epistularum*, pp. 251 = 182. The Khūzistānī chronicle mentions the high honour in which the Ishmaelite authorities held the previous Patriarch Maremmeh (*Chronica Minora*, pp. 32 = 27), but this may have been the reward of earlier collaboration (see J. M. Fiey, 'Īšō'yaw le Grand. Vie du catholicos nestorien Īšō'yaw III d'Adiabène (580–659)', *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 1970, p. 5).

9. Bar Penkaye in A. Mingana (ed. and tr.), *Sources syriaques*, Leipzig n.d., pp. *146 = *175; cf. also the untranslated text at p. *141, where the Arab invasion would seem to be regarded as a work of divine providence. (The 'leader' in the first passage is Muhammad.) Compare the markedly philo-Christian (and anti-Jewish) sentiment of Koran 5:85.

10. E. Amélineau (ed. and tr.), *Histoire du Patriarche copte Isaac* (= *Publications de l'Ecole des Lettres d'Alger*, vol. ii), Paris 1890, pp. 58–63, 67. A background of earlier and in some measure continuing anti-Christian sentiment is indicated (pp. 43, 67; note the continuity of the governor's hatred of the cross).

11. Nau, 'Colloque'. For the historicity of the circumstantial detail given in the text, see *ibid.*, pp. 226f. In the account of the disputation given by Michael the Syrian (*Chronique*, vol. iv, pp. 421f = vol. ii, pp. 431f), the emir is named as 'Amru bar Sa'd, and there can be little doubt that he is to be identified with the 'Umayr b. Sa'd al-Anṣārī who appears as governor of Ḥimṣ and other areas in the period 641–4 (Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, I, pp. 2646, 2798; note the quite exceptional union of Damascus with Ḥimṣ under his authority indicated in both sources). Accordingly the date 644 seems preferable to the alternative 639. For the question of the integrity of the text, see below, p. 168, n. 20.

12. Note particularly the wording of the question: 'He whom you have said to be the messiah, is he God or not?' (Nau, 'Colloque', pp. 248f = 258); thereafter the emir simply refers to Jesus as the messiah. Contrast the Ishmaelite king's letter of 653 (see above, p. 6).

13. *Chronica Minora*, pp. 71 = 55.

14. Koran 4:156. Note also the preference expressed by the demons for the *ḥanpe* (here clearly the Mahgraye) as against the Jews on the ground that the former 'do not believe the Messiah to be God' in a Syriac text probably dating

from the time of Mu'āwiya (Nau, 'Notice historique', pp. 94 = 82; the author, Daniel of Edessa, was bishop of that city in the years 665–84 (*ibid.*, p. 76)).

15. *Chronica Minora*, pp. 71 = 55f.

16. Koran 3:40 etc.

17. F. Nau, 'Lettre de Jacques d'Edesse sur la généalogie de la sainte Vierge', *Revue de l'Orient chrétien* 1901, pp. 518 = 523f. The letter was written towards the end of his life, but may well reflect earlier experience.

18. See above, p. 8.

19. See above, p. 19.

20. The specification is not entirely without significance, since in principle an Arab religion of Abraham could just as well be a Keturid, and hence Sabean or Midianite, affair (cf. above, p. 159, n. 48, and below, p. 164, n. 38, and p. 174, n. 40).

21. See below, pp. 21ff.

22. 'I see that the sons of man do not eat save according to the commandments (*miṣwot*) of Ethan the Ezrahite' (Jellinek, *Bet ha-Midrasch*, vol. iii, p. 79; cf. Lewis, 'Apocalyptic Vision', p. 313). Ethan the Ezrahite is to be identified with Abraham: this is a standard rabbinic identification (see for example Babylonian Talmud, *Baba Batra*, f. 15a), and the 'Secrets' is not alone in relating Abraham to Num. 24:21 (to the exegesis of which the quotation belongs) through the occurrence of the word *etan* in the verse (*Exodus Rabbah*, 27:6).

23. The text of this 'Dispute which took place between an Arab and a monk of the convent of Bet Ḥale' is preserved in Codex Diyarbekir 95, now in the library of the Chaldean church in Mardin. The only indication of date is the mention of the emir Maslama (f. 1a of the 'Dispute'). On the basis of the entry in Scher's catalogue of the Diyarbekir collection, Baumstark identified the work as the tract of Abraham of Bet Ḥale 'against the Arabs' mentioned in the catalogue of 'Abd-Isho' (see A. Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur*, Bonn 1922, p. 211). If this identification is right, the date usually given for Abraham (c. 670) is a good deal too early.

24. 'Dispute', f. 2b.

25. Compare also the statement of the Arab that 'we are attentive to the commandments of Muḥammad and the sacrifices of Abraham' ('Dispute', f. 1b).

26. Our use of the 'Letter of Omar and reply of Leo' is based on the translations of K. Patkanian (*Istoriya Khalifov Vardapeta Gevonda*, St Petersburg 1862, pp. 29–70) and A. Jeffery ('Ghevond's text of the Correspondence between 'Umar II and Leo III', *The Harvard Theological Review* 1944). There is no serious reason to doubt that the chronicle itself dates from the late eighth century; the correspondence gives the impression of a rehashing of materials of very varied date. (The 'Jāḥiẓiyya' are an invention of the modern translators.)

27. Levond, 'Letter', tr. Patkanian, p. 30 = tr. Jeffery, p. 278. The Christians are also accused of observing Sunday instead of Saturday (cf. the allegation that

Mu'āwiya shifted the Friday prayer to Saturday, Ibn 'Asākir, *Ta'rīkh*, vol. i, p. 351).

28. E. Beck (ed. and tr.), *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Sermones III* (= CSCO, Scriptores Syri, vols. cxxxviiif), Louvain 1972, pp. 61 = 81. The reference is of course to circumcision.

29. Note for example the formulations 'Whoever prays as we do, observes our *qibla*, and eats our sacrifices (*dhabīḥa*) is a Muslim (Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 69; Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, I, p. 2020; Abū 'Ubayd, *Kitāb al-amwāl*, no. 51), and 'Whoever professes our *shahāda*, observes our *qibla*, and is circumcised, do not take *jizya* from him' (Abū 'Ubayd, *Kitāb al-amwāl*, no. 125).

30. Note that neither of the formulations cited in the preceding note mèntions both circumcision and sacrifice.

31. J. Wellhausen, *Reste arabischen Heidentums*[2], Berlin 1897, p. 120.

32. Cf. the remark of 'Umar II that God sent Muḥammad as a *dā'ī*, not as a *khātin* (Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, II, p. 1354).

33. See above, p. 19.

34. For circumcision, see for example S. Krauss, 'Talmudische Nachrichten über Arabien', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 1916, p. 351; for sacrifice, see for example Wellhausen, *Reste arabischen Heidentums*, p. 119.

35. F. Nau, 'Littérature canonique syriaque inédite', *Revue de l'Orient chrétien* 1909, pp. 128–30. For the exact date see A. Vööbus, *Syrische Kanonessammlungen*, vol. i (= CSCO, Subsidia, vols. xxxv, xxxviii), Louvain 1970, p. 201. The conquerors appear as 'Mahgraye' in the heading of the letter (which may be later, but not later than the eighth century, *ibid.*, p. 200), and as *ḥanpe* (cf. the pre-Islamic responsum on the same subject, Nau, 'Littérature canonique', p. 46) in the text of the letter.

36. Kayser, *Die Canones Jacobs von Edessa*, pp. 4 = 35. That the Ṭayyaye in question are not the old pagans is clear from the fact that Jacob goes on to deal with the *ḥanpe* as a separate category.

37. Of the references in Genesis to Abraham's sacrificial activities, 13:18 at least has to be taken as provincial.

38. How easily this aegis might be evoked, if indeed it was entirely new, can be seen from a source of the early fifth century which describes the Sabeans as descendants of Abraham and Keturah who practice circumcision (on the eighth day!) and sacrifice (clearly pagan) (Philostorgius as epitomised by Photius, *PG*, vol. lxv, col. 481).

39. Compare the use of the term *ḥanpe* by Athanasius of Balad (above, note 35) and Daniel of Edessa (above, p. 162, n. 14). (For later Arabic use of the term *ḥanīf* in the sense of 'pagan', see S. M. Stern, ''Abd Al-Jabbār's Account of how Christ's Religion was Falsified by the Adoption of Roman Customs', *The Journal of Theological Studies* 1968, pp. 161f.)

40. To take the most obvious example, sacred genealogy: the status of Joseph

as against Judah for the Samaritans, like that of Ishmael as against Israel for the Hagarenes, perpetuates a literal genealogical idiom which is lost in a religion for which all men are brothers.

41. See above, p. 8.

42. We know little of the early relations between the Samaritans and the conquerors. Two Syriac sources attest the slaughter of Samaritans at the time of the conquest (*Chronica Minora*, pp. 148 = 114; Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, vol. iv, p. 411 = vol. ii, p. 413). For the period after the conquest, we are told that the Samaritans paid no land tax in return for their services as guides and spies (Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 158). The Samaritan historical tradition displays a certain partiality for Muḥammad (Vilmar (ed.), *Abulfathi Annales*, especially p. 180).

43. See above, p. 11.

44. Nau, 'Colloque', pp. 248 = 257f.

45. Cf. also the subsequent observation of the patriarch that 'you have said that you accept Moses and his writings' (*ibid.*, pp. 249 = 258).

46. *Ibid.*, pp. 250f = 260.

47. See above, p. 13.

48. Levond, 'Letter', tr. Patkanian, p. 30 = tr. Jeffery, p. 277.

49. Denial of the resurrection crops up in various heretical groups (see G. Hoffmann, *Auszüge aus syrischen Akten persischer Märtyrer*, Leipzig 1880, pp. 75f, 122ff). But implicit in 'Umar's question is the old Sadducee combination of this denial with the rejection of the prophets, and for the early Islamic period this is attested only in Samaritan heresy (for the survival of this heresy as late as the ninth century, see Vilmar (ed.), *Abulfathi Annales*, p. lxxxiii). Compare the Koranic allusion to the people of the book who do not believe in God or the Last Day (Koran 9:29), and Leo's inclusion in a list of Muslim heretical groups of those who 'deny the existence of God and the resurrection' (Levond, 'Letter', tr. Patkanian, p. 42 = tr. Jeffery, p. 295). The question of nudity at the resurrection (*ibid.*, tr. Patkanian, p. 29 = tr. Jeffery, p. 277) also has Samaritan associations (cf. the Samaritan's question cited in Levy, *Wörterbuch*, s.v. *shaliaḥ*), and it is perhaps worth adding that the Shī'ite usage of the term *qā'im* has a precedent in Samaritan heresy (H. G. Kippenberg, *Garizim und Synagoge*, Berlin 1971, p. 131n).

50. Levond, 'Letter', tr. Patkanian, pp. 39f = tr. Jeffery, p. 291.

51. *Ibid.*, tr. Patkanian, p. 29 = tr. Jeffery, p. 277.

52. In another rather suggestive passage, Leo remarks on the Hagarene disparagement of the Gospels and prophets on the ground that they are falsified, and proceeds to base his argument on a series of scriptural citations which, he stresses, are from the Pentateuch (*ibid.*, tr. Patkanian, pp. 45f = tr. Jeffery, pp. 299f). Note also the Samaritan ring of the Hagarene insinuation detected by Leo that Ezra falsified the scriptures (*ibid.*, tr. Patkanian, p. 38 = tr. Jeffery, p. 289).

53. Compare also the absence of mention of the prophets in the statement of a late Syriac source that Muḥammad 'accepted Moses and his book, and accepted the Gospel . . .' (J.-B. Chabot (ed. and tr.), *Chronicon ad annum Christi 1234 pertinens* (= CSCO, Scriptores Syri, vols. xxxvif, lvi), Louvain 1916 etc., pp. 229 = 179; contrast the parallel version of Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, vol. iv, p. 406 = vol. ii, p. 404, where the prophets are duly included).

54. Samaritanism also suggested concrete alternatives which will be considered in Chapter 4.

55. It is not clear whether we are to think of the Torah which 'Abdallāh b. 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ read alongside the *Furqān* (Kister, 'Ḥaddithū', p. 231), and the *turh* (*sic*, not *Orayta*) which the monk of Bet Ḥale cites alongside the Koran and other works as a source of law (see below, p. 167, n. 14), as some sort of Arabic targum. There is no trace of one in the disputation between the patriarch and the emir (Nau, 'Colloque', especially pp. 251 = 260f).

NOTES TO CHAPTER 3

1. See above, p. 12. Compare also the revivalist characterisation of Muḥammad given by Bar Penkaye: he was the guide of the Arabs from whom they had their monotheism according to the 'old law' (Mingana, *Sources syriaques*, pp. *146f = *175).

2. See for example Koran 28:46. We take the frequent Koranic attribution of a scripture to the Prophet even in his role of warner to be secondary: it extends to none of the earlier warners.

3. Contrast the obscure and dislocated Koranic treatment of scriptural prophecy.

4. Note how the redeemer and lawgiver of the *Israelites* tends to become a non-scriptural messenger sent to warn the *Egyptians*, so much so that at one point the latter inquire 'Art thou come unto us to turn us aside from that which we found our fathers practised?' (Koran 10:79).

5. Note also the Mosaic model for *seriatim* revelation (B. J. Bamberger, 'Revelations of Torah after Sinai', *Hebrew Union College Annual* 1941).

6. For Sebeos, see above, p. 7; for Samuel of Ani, see E. Dulaurier, *Recherches sur la chronologie arménienne*, vol. i, Paris 1859, p. 354.

7. For the Koranic use of *furqān* in these senses, in both Mosaic and contemporary contexts, see *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², Leyden and London 1960–, art. 'Furḳān'. Compare also the transformation of the authenticating signs of the redemptive context (cf. the Hebrew *otot*) into scriptural verses (Arabic *āyāt*).

8. Contrast the interpretation of the verse given in the 'Secrets' (above, p. 5) with that attributed to 'Umar by Levond ('Letter', tr. Patkanian, p. 30 = tr. Jeffery, p. 278). In the former the rider on the ass is the Judaic messiah, and the rider on the camel merely heralds his coming; in the latter the rider on the ass is the Christian messiah, while the rider on the camel is now his companion and equal, the Hagarene lawgiver.

9. Deut. 18:15, 18. The 'brethren' of these verses could readily be interpreted as the Ishmaelites in relation to the Israelites (see for example A. Mingana (ed. and tr.), 'Timothy's Apology for Christianity', in his *Woodbrooke Studies*, vol. ii, Cambridge 1928, pp. 123 = 50, and Abū 'l-Rayḥān Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Bīrūnī al-Khwārizmī, *Kitāb al-āthār al-bāqiya 'ani 'l-qurūn al-khāliya*, ed. C. E. Sachau, Leipzig 1878, p. 19).

10. Ibn Isḥāq, *Sīra*, pp. 231 = 160, 353 = 240.

11. For Abraham's scripture, see above, p. 12.

12. The statement that the Prophet had received seven *mathānī* as well as the Koran (15:87; the scriptural status of *mathānī* is clear from 39:24) is followed by a condemnation of those who divide the Koran (15:90f); some of the 'factions' deny some of what has been revealed to the Prophet (13:36) – quite apart from those who think it should have been revealed all at once (25:34) or want it altered or exchanged (10:16). The distinction between *muḥkam* and *mutashābih* in 3:5 is perhaps reminiscent of the view reported in 13:36.

13. Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, I, p. 2952 (a reference for the significance of which we are indebted to discussion with Dr Wansbrough). Cf. also the tradition which designates what is presumably the 'Constitution of Medina' as revelation (Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. ii, p. 260).

14. The Arab asks why the Christians adore the cross when there is no authority for this practice in the Gospel. The monk replies: 'I don't think that Muḥammad taught you all your laws and commandments in the Koran; rather there are some which you have taught (*sic*) from the Koran, and some are in the *ṣurat albaqarah*, and in the *gygy* and in the *twrh*. So also with us: some are commandments which our Lord taught us, some the Holy Spirit uttered through the mouths of its servants the Apostles, and some [it made known] through teachers, directing us and showing us the way of life and the path of light' (f. 6a). What is the *gygy*?

15. See below, p. 168, n. 21.

16. We owe this interpretation of the literary character of the Koran entirely to Dr Wansbrough.

17. We need hardly stress how little the contents of the Koran itself help to identify the historical context in which it originated. The few explicit references to a pagan and Arabian environment are balanced by an allusiveness in the retelling of Biblical narratives which presupposes an audience already familiar with them; cf. also the way in which the polemic on the resurrection is firmly based on the axiom of a first monotheist creation (we owe both points to Dr Wansbrough).

18. Van Berchem, *Corpus*, part two, vol. ii, nos. 215–17. There is extensive agreement with our text in no. 215 (but note particularly the conflation of our 64:1 and 57:2 which appears twice, and the variant verbal forms of 19:34); on the other hand, there is extensive deviance from our text in nos. 216f (in the case of no. 217, none of the four verses represented is in a form coinciding with our text, and in particular the creed (closest to our 2:130) appears with two omissions and three variants). Compare also the early papyrus fragment in which

the letters *th* appear immediately following 1:1–3 (Grohmann, *Arabic Papyri from Ḫirbet el-Mird*, no. 72).

19. 'Dispute', ff. 1a, 6a (*qwr'n*). The first reference is uninformative, the second is quoted above, p. 167, n. 14.

20. The emir inquires about the laws of the Christians, their nature and content, and in particular whether or not they are written in the Gospel. He adds: 'If a man dies and leaves sons or daughters and a wife and a mother and a sister and a (paternal) cousin, how is his property supposed to be divided among them?' (Nau, 'Colloque', pp. 251 = 261). If, as the context suggests, the emir feels that the answer ought to be found in Christian scripture, then the presumption is that an answer was also to be found in his own; and the Koranic norms, with their elaborate division of the inheritance (Koran 4:8 etc.), go somewhat better with the question than those of the Pentateuch, where the daughters and other relatives inherit only if there are no sons (Num. 27:8). But the point is hardly conclusive, and the formulation of the question is in any case very much in the style of the Christian law-books (see for example E. Sachau, *Syrische Rechtsbücher*, Berlin 1907–14, vol. ii, pp. 90 = 91, and vol. iii, pp. 94 = 95). There is also some reason to suspect that in this section of the disputation we may not have the text in its original state: the construction of the section is uncharacteristically dislocated (for example, the emir's question on inheritance is simply ignored in the patriarch's answer), and the form 'Mahgra' appears only in the discussion of law (cf. above, p. 159, n. 51).

21. Ḥajjāj 'collected all your old writings, composed others according to his own tastes, and disseminated them everywhere among your nation . . . From this destruction there escaped only a small number of works of Abou-T'ouṛab [i.e. 'Alī], for he could not make them disappear completely' (Levond, 'Letter', tr. Patkanian, p. 44 = tr. Jeffery, p. 298). For Kindī's account of the role of Ḥajjāj, see Jeffery's note (*loc. cit.*). Contrast Leo's earlier attribution of the composition of the *P'ourkan* (i.e. *Furqān*) to 'Umar, 'Alī and Salmān al-Fārisī (*ibid.*, tr. Patkanian, p. 40 = tr. Jeffery, p. 292).

22. See the material collected by Jeffery in his note to the passage quoted from Levond in the previous note.

23. Thus in one tradition the Prophet says 'Were Moses among you and if you followed him, leaving me, you would have gone astray' (Kister, 'Ḥaddithū', p. 234; cf. also p. 235).

24. *Ibid.*, p. 236.

25. The Dome of the Rock attests Hagarene belief in the 'prophets' (van Berchem, *Corpus*, part two, vol. ii, no. 217), and the Arab who disputes with the monk of Bet Ḥale explicitly recognises their authority ('Dispute', f. 5b). Note that 'Abd al-Malik has a son named Solomon and grandsons named Job and David.

26. The Gospel thereby becomes a scripture revealed to Jesus (see for example

Koran 5:50) which constitutes a law by which his followers can be judged (5:51):

27. A full harmony between prophecy and genealogy could of course have been achieved only at the cost of the outright rejection of the Judaic and Christian scriptures. If such a view was ever maintained, it might account for a curious anathema of the creed known as 'Fiqh Akbar I': 'Whoso believeth all that he is bound to believe, except that he says, I do not know whether Moses and Jesus do or do not belong to the Apostles, is an infidel' (A. J. Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed*, Cambridge 1932, p. 104). Actual Islamic attitudes to the relationship between ethnicity and religious truth remained ambivalent and somewhat relativistic.

28. For the prophetological mess arising from the Koranic residue of the religion of Abraham, see Kâtib Chelebi, *The Balance of Truth*, tr. G. I. Lewis, London 1957, pp. 110–23.

29. Cf. above, p. 13.

30. Van Berchem, *Corpus*, part two, vol. ii, no. 217.

31. For a more detailed – though by now slightly dated – discussion see further P. Crone, *The Mawālī in the Umayyad Period*, London Ph.D. 1974, especially pp. 215ff.

32. Both provide examples of phrases of the type *ashlem nafsheh le-mareh* in the sense of 'to surrender oneself/one's soul to God'. But no reliably pre-Islamic Jewish instance has been adduced (that sometimes cited from *Midrash Tanḥuma* (ed. S. Buber, Wilna 1885, p. 63) can hardly be taken as such, see *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Jerusalem 1971f, art. 'Tanḥuma Yelammedenu'). In Syriac the usage is definitely attested from the pre-Islamic period. But either it means to die (as in the 'Life' of Rabbula, in J. J. Overbeck (ed.), *S. Ephraemi Syri, Rabulae episcopi Edesseni, Balaei aliorumque opera selecta*, Oxford 1865, p. 206); or the reference is to Christ, as in the case of the young people who 'were persuaded by our Lord, and gave up themselves to Him' in the 'Acts of St. Thomas' (W. Wright (ed. and tr.), *Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles*, London 1871, pp. 182 = 156; for the date of this text, cf. pp. xivf of the 'Preface' to the text); compare also the case of the man who 'surrenders himself . . . to the Messiah' in a text of the second half of the seventh century (Palladius, Hieronymus *et al.*, *The Book of Paradise*, ed. and tr. E. A. W. Budge, London 1904, pp. 222 = 275; for the date of this Syriac translation, see Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur*, pp. 201f).

33. J. Macdonald (ed. and tr.), *Memar Marqah*, Berlin 1963, pp. 85 = 136 (*ashlem nafsheh le-mareh*, of Abraham); 90 = 147 (of the patriarchs in general). In the second passage, the idea is associated with God's recompensing of the righteous, in striking parallelism with Koran 2:106.

34. Compare *shallem nafsheh le-mareh* (*Memar Marqah*, pp. 43 = 67); *eshtelem* (pp. 60 = 93); *eshta'bad* and *meshta'bedin* (*ibid.*); and the frequent use of the root *rḳn* (e.g. pp. 98, 104 = 162, 173).

35. Note particularly the parallelism between the submission of the righteous

man to God and his espousal of the religion of Abraham (Koran 4:124), and that between the designations *millat Ibrāhīm* and *muslimūn* (22:77).

36. A comparison of the Koranic version (37:99ff) with those of the Targums as analysed by G. Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism*, Leyden 1961, chapter 8, brings out clearly the way in which the Koran follows the targumic *narrative* in building up the voluntary role of Isaac only to omit the *interpretation* which this narrative was designed to support, viz. the redemptive force of Isaac's self-sacrifice. Instead the Koran interprets the incident as an instance of God's recompensing the righteous (37:105, 110). It is not a very arresting theme, but it is precisely the one whose association with Samartitan submission has just been noted.

37. See the entry *ashlem* in J. Levy, *Chaldäisches Wörterbuch über die Targumim*, Leipzig 1867f.

38. Cf. D. Künstlinger, '"Islām", "Muslim", "aslama" im Kurān', *Rocznik Orjentalistyczny* 1935, pp. 133f, 136. Compare also the very suggestive use of the corresponding Hebrew *passive* participle *mushlam* in the context of the relationship between man and God (see M. Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature*, London 1895–1903, *s.v.*; the instance cited from *Genesis Rabbah* should certainly be pre-Islamic).

39. See above, pp. 8f.

40. See above, p. 160, n. 55.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 4

1. Except in the peculiar case of Ethiopia, where the Davidic monarchy is nationalised by virtue of the adoption of Israelite descent (cf. above, p. 16).

2. Though not of course for William Blake, with his attempt to Anglicise the sacred geography of the Bible against the background of a Druidic *dīn Ibrāhīm*.

3. We have made no attempt to investigate other possible influences of Samaritanism on Islam. The most obvious candidate would be the monotheist confession, as already suggested by M. Gaster (*The Encyclopaedia of Islam*[1], Leyden 1913–38, art. 'Samaritans'). The confession 'There is no God but one' is a characteristically Samaritan locution in form, and is very common in pre-Islamic Samaritan texts. As in Islam, it is regarded as a testimony (see Z. Ben-Ḥayyim, *The Literary and Oral Tradition of Hebrew and Aramaic amongst the Samaritans*, vol. iii, part two, Jerusalem 1967, p. 164, and compare the set phrase 'let us testify . . .' which regularly precedes the confession in the *Memar Marqah*). The Samaritan and Islamic versions differ of course over the last word of the confession, but note the instability of the Koranic forms in this respect (13:29, 37:34, 64:13), and the common addition of *waḥdahu* to the standard Islamic form, e.g. in the Dome of the Rock. In this case, as *a fortiori* in that of *islām*, the question of the contamination of Samaritan texts by Islamic influence is always something of an embarrassment (see particularly the remarks of Z. Ben-Ḥayyim with respect to the text of the *Memar Marqah* in his review of Macdonald's edition, *Bibliotheca Orientalis*

1966, especially p. 90); this issue does not of course arise with respect to the Samaritan scriptural position, or, except in matters of detail, the calques considered in this chapter.

4. For the period between the break with the Jews and the construction of the Dome of the Rock we have only negative evidence on Hagarene attitudes to the sanctity of the city: the Christian focus of Mu'āwiya's interest in its sacred topography (see above, p. 11); the makeshift character of the wooden oratory reported by Arculf on the site of the Temple a decade later (see p. 161, n. 3); and the jibe of St Anastasius the Sinaite in his polemic against the Jews that their temple lies ruined and burnt (*PG*, vol. lxxxix, col. 1226).

5. For the Meccan *rukn*, see Wellhausen, *Reste arabischen Heidentums*, p. 74. Abraham's pillar was still on display in Shechem in the third century after Christ (Kippenberg, *Garizim und Synagoge*, p. 112).

6. *Wa-qad narā taqalluba wajhika fī 'l-samā'*, as the Koran has it in the key passage on the *qibla* (2:139). This reference the instability of the *qibla* is not the only Koranic indication of controversy in this area: 9:108 refers to a *masjid* maliciously adopted with a veiw to splitting the believers, and 2:109 suggests dispensing with a *qibla*.

7. F. Nau, 'Révélations et légendes. Méthodius. Clément. Andronicus', *Journal asiatique* 1917, pp. 427, 431 = 437, 440. Nau's argument that this version of the apocalypse is the original one is not persuasive: there is no trace of Mecca in the European or latter Syrian traditions of pseudo-Methodius, and above all it makes no appearance in the version in the Vatican codex Syr. 58, regarded by Kmosko as the best attestation of the original text (M. Kmosko, 'Das Rätsel des Pseudomethodius', *Byzantion* 1931, p. 276; we are indebted to Dr Sebastian Brock for checking his photostat of the manuscript for us).

8. 'Continuatio Byzantia Arabica', p. 347. The context is the second civil war. The chronicle notes the claim that it is the house of Abraham, and gives a location in the desert between Ur of the Chaldees and Ḥarrān.

9. The chronicle ends with the accession of Hishām ('Continuatio Byzantia Arabica', p. 359) and was clearly written during his reign (*ibid.*, p. 346).

10. It also refers to such minor (and hence mobile) toponyms as 'Arafāt (2:194) and Ṣafā and Marwa (2:153).

11. The accepted reading of the consonantal skeleton may be nothing more than a way of bringing it into rhyme with Mecca.

12. M. Gaster, *The Asatir*, London 1927, pp. 34 = 262 (we owe this reference to Mr G. R. Hawting).

13. J. H. Petermann, *Versuch einer hebräischen Formenlehre nach der Aussprache der heutigen Samaritaner*, Leipzig 1869, p. 186.

14. Note that the Koranic treatment of the *qibla* points to some sort of Biblical sanction (2:139, 141). Levond has 'Umar accuse the Christians of not praying towards the region indicated by the 'laws' ('Letter', tr. Patkanian, p. 55 = tr. Jeffrey, p. 310).

15. See above, pp. 24f.

16. Cf. the tradition that the valley of Mecca had itself been fertile in former times (A. J. Wensinck, *The Ideas of the Western Semites concerning the Navel of the Earth*, Amsterdam 1916, p. 34).

17. M. J. Kister, '"You shall only set out for three mosques": a study of an early tradition', *Le Muséon* 1969, p. 192.

18. The Samaritan Targum by contrast tended to leave the Pentateuchal toponymy intact. The renderings of the Peshitta could be more helpful. The form Mansha which appears there for the Mesha of Gen. 10:30 on the delimitation of the territory of the Joktanites is perhaps the source of the form al-Mansāh, one of the more recondite names of Mecca (R. Dozy, *Die Israeliten zu Mekka*, Leipzig and Haarlem 1864, p. 89). The level of interest in the potentialities of other people's scriptures which this would imply is nothing unusual in the period: in Isho'dad of Merv we have a *Nestorian* who could cite the Samaritan Pentateuch in support of his views on sacred geography (C. van den Eynde (ed. and tr.), *Commentaire d'Iso'dad de Merv sur l'Ancien Testament* (= CSCO, Scriptores Syri, vols. lxvii, lxxv etc.), Louvain 1950–, *II. Exode-Deutéronomie*, pp. 129 = 174f).

19. Reqam (= Petra) for Qadesh: Onqelos, pseudo-Jonathan and Neophyti at Gen. 16:14 and 20:1. Ḥaluṣa (= Elusa) for Shur: pseudo-Jonathan at 25:18 and Neophyti there and at 16:7 and 20:1; Ḥaluṣa for Bered: pseudo-Jonathan and Neophyti at 16:14. (Elusa appears as al-Khalūṣ in papyri of the 670s, C. J. Kraemer, *Non-literary Papyri* (= *Excavations at Nessana*, vol. iii), Princeton, N.J. 1958, nos. 60, 62.).

20. T. Nöldeke, 'Der Gott *mr' byt'* und die Ka'ba', *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und verwandte Gebiete* 1909 (and note the epigraphical attestation of the god Hubal and the name Quṣayy in the north-west, A. Grohmann, *Arabien*, Munich 1963, p. 87, and G. L. Harding, *An Index and Concordance of pre-Islamic Arabian names and inscriptions*, Toronto 1971, *s.n. qṣy*). Cf. also the black stone of Petra (J. H. Mordtmann, 'Dusares bei Epiphanius', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 1876, p. 104), and the abundant epigraphical and other attestation of the three Arabian deities of Koran 53:19 in the north-west (Grohmann, *Arabien*, pp. 82–4).

21. Ḥagra for Shur: Onqelos at Gen. 16:7, 20:1, 25:18; pseudo-Jonathan at 16:7 and 20:1. Ḥagra for Bered: Onqelos at 16:14.

22. This is not the only possible location for the targumic Ḥagra (Babylonian Talmud, *Gittin*, f. 4a, points to one adjoining the land of Israel); but a Jewish inscription recently found in the area attests both the name and the fact of Jewish settlement in the fourth century after Christ (F. Altheim and R. Stiehl, *Die Araber in der Alten Welt*, vol. v, part one, Berlin 1968, pp. 305f).

23. Note that whereas Bakka is fully absorbed into Mecca, al-Ḥijr remains a place in its own right, already in the Koran reclassified as an object of divine wrath (15:78–84).

24. All the significant *umam khāliya* of the Arabian past are to be sought here: Midian, Thamūd and ʿĀd (for the location of the latter, see *Encyclopaedia of Islam*², *s.n.*). And note how the Prophet tells his contemporaries that God has destroyed cities *around* them (46:26). Cf. also Koran 30:1f, where the Greeks are said to have been defeated in the *nearest* (part) of the land.

25. In both the first and second civil wars, we find accounts of people proceeding from Medina to Iraq via Mecca (for Ṭalḥa and al-Zubayr, see J. van Ess, *Frühe Muʿtazilitische Häresiographie*, Beirut 1971, text p. 16; for Husayn, see Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-islām*, Cairo 1367–9, vol. ii, p. 343).

26. K. A. C. Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*², vol. i, part one, Oxford 1969, pp. 137ff (Wāsiṭ); G. Fehérvári, *Development of the Miḥrāb down to the XIVth Century*, London Ph.D. 1961, p. 89 (Ishaf Beni Junayd near Baghdad). Jāḥiẓ includes the alteration of the *qibla* of Wāsiṭ among the misdeeds of Walīd I and his ilk (H. al-Sandūbī (ed.), *Rasāʾil al-Jāḥiẓ*, Cairo 1933, p. 296).

27. This is implied by the tradition about the first mosque at Kūfa as given in Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 276, and stated by Jacob of Edessa in the passage cited below.

28. In addition to the testimonies discussed in the text, the curious statement of Severus that that the Arabs pray *ilā ʾl-jiha ʾl-qibliyya mushriqīna ilā . . . ʾl-kaʿba* is perhaps a confused reflection of a statement in his Coptic source to the effect that they prayed to the east (Severus ibn al-Muqaffaʿ, *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria*, ed. and tr. B. Evetts, in *Patrologia Orientalis*, vol. i, p. 492).

29. Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*², vol. i, part one, pp. 37, 150. The amount of the deviation is not indicated. but compare the tradition that ʿAmr prayed facing slightly south of east (Aḥmad b. ʿAlī al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-mawāʿiẓ wa ʾl-iʿtibār*, Cairo 1326, vol. iv, p. 6). Cf. also the tradition in which the *muṣallā* is associated with the accursed as against the holy mountain (Muḥammad b. Yūsuf al-Kindī, *Kitāb al-wulāt wa-kitāb al-quḍāt*, ed. R. Guest, Leyden and London 1912, p. 13).

30. British Museum, Add. 12,172, f. 124a (see Wright, *Catalogue of Syriac Manuscripts*, p. 604). He is disposing of a silly question as to why the Jews pray facing south: 'For it is not to the south that the Jews pray (*sagdin*); nor for that matter do the Mahgraye. The Jews who live in Egypt, as likewise the Mahgraye there, as I saw with my own eyes and will now set out for you, prayed to the east, and still do, both peoples – the Jews towards Jerusalem, and the Mahgraye towards the Kaʿba (*kʿbʾ*). And those Jews who are to the south of Jerusalem pray to the north; and those in Babylonia and *nhrtʾ* and *bwṣrtʾ* pray to the west. And also the Mahgraye who are there pray to the west, towards the Kaʿba; and those who are to the south of the Kaʿba pray to the north, towards the place. So from all this it is clear that it is not to the south that the Jews and Mahgraye here in the regions of Syria pray, but towards Jerusalem or the Kaʿba, the patriarchal (*abahayata*) places of their races.' Jacob had studied in Alexandria in his youth (Vööbus, *Syrische Kanonessammlungen*, p. 207).

31. See above, p. 4. Compare the account of Muḥammad's early travels as a merchant given in the chronicle of Jacob of Edessa, according to which he visits Palestine and Phoenicia, with that given in the *Sīra*, which gets him no farther than Bosra (*Chronica Minora*, pp. 326 = 250; Ibn Isḥāq, *Sīra*, pp. 115 = 79).

32. The invaders claim that the land is promised to them by God (*mawʿūd allāh*, Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh*, I, p. 2254), and that it is a divinely conferred inheritance (*ibid.*, p. 2284). In another passage (*ibid.*, p. 2289), these notions are conjoined with the Koranic citation (21:105) of Ps. 37:29 on the inheritance of the land by the righteous. Compare the tendentious reshaping of the career of Khālid b. al-Walīd in the Islamic historical tradition (*Encyclopaedia of Islam*², *s.n.*).

33. See above, p. 9. Contrast the implication in the passage cited from Sebeos (above, p. 7) that the non-Palestinian conquests are merely interest charged on the Byzantine usurpation of the promised land.

34. Cf. for example the section on 'the expulsion of the Jews from the Arabian peninsula' in Abū Dāwūd, *Sunan*, vol. ii, p. 43, and the account of 'Umar's expulsion of the Jews of Arabia to Syria in Ibn Saʿd, *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt*, vol. iii, p. 203.

35. Note the tradition that Aws and Khazraj were of Jewish descent (Kister, 'Ḥaddithū', p. 233).

36. Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. ii, pp. 267f, where further traditions to the same effect are also given; see also *ibid.*, vol. iii, p. 35; Abū 'Ubayd, *Kitāb al-amwāl*, no. 531; Wensinck, *Concordance*, *s.v. hijra.*

37. The primary sense of the term *medinah* in Judaic usage is 'province', as opposed to the 'sanctuary' (*miqdash*); and unlike the alternative sense of 'city', this gives the right contrast with *umm al-qurā*.

38. Sebeos makes no mention of such a base, but already in the fragmentary Maronite chronicle we are told that Muʿāwiya did not wish to govern from the seat (*kūrsay*) of Muḥammad (*Chronica Minora*, pp. 71 = 56).

39. A firm identification of Medina and Yathrib appears in the Khūzistānī chronicle (*Chronica Minora*, pp. 38 = 31; for this source, cf. above, p. 153, n. 7). The Koran refers to Medina at one point in such a manner as to suggest that it was the Prophet's base (33:60f); elsewhere it refers to Yathrib (33:13), but gives no indication whether or not Yathrib is Medina.

40. Notably again the Khūzistānī chronicle (*loc. cit.*; cf. also the identification of Yathrib as the city of Ketura in the Chronicle of Siʿird, Scher, *Histoire nestorienne*, p. 600). The composite account of the origins of Islam given by Thomas Artsruni (Brosset, *Collection d'historiens arméniens*, vol. i, pp. 88–90) names the Prophet's base as Midian, and incidentally identifies Mecca with Pharan, explicitly located in Arabia Petraea. A town of Midian is known in the north-west in both ancient and Islamic sources, and a site has been identified for it (see A. Musil, *The Northern Ḥeǧâz*, New York 1926, pp. 278–82, and P. J. Parr *et al.*, 'Preliminary Survey in N.W. Arabia, 1968', *Bulletin of the Institute of Archaeology* 1971, pp. 30–5). The Koran of course disposes of Midian by making it an object of divine retribution.

41. It receives its warning in Arabic (Koran 42:5).

42. It even possesses an originally Ka'ba-like structure, modified by 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz to prevent its being taken for a *qibla*, and identified in the Islamic tradition as the Prophet's tomb (J. Sauvaget, *La mosquée omeyyade de Médine*, Paris 1947, p. 89). Alternatively, the *ḥujar* of the mosque of Medina can be compared to the *ḥijr* of the Meccan sanctuary: the Medinese *ḥujar* (identified as the 'rooms' of the Prophet's wives) contain the grave of Muḥammad just as the Meccan *ḥijr* contains that of Ishmael, and they are included in the rebuilt mosque by 'Umar b. 'Abd al-'Azīz (*ibid.*, pp. 10–12) just as the *ḥijr* is included in the rebuilt Ka'ba by Ibn al-Zubayr. It is also easy enough to identify a Medinese analogue to the Meccan pilgrimage to the holy place *outside* the city: on the two great festivals, the Prophet used to go out to a *muṣallā* on the territory of the Banū Salama, and even sacrifice there (F. Buhl, *Das Leben Muhammeds*[3], Heidelberg 1961, p. 205). Note also that Medina, not Mecca, is the primary residence of the sacred lineage of Islam, the 'Alids.

43. Contrast the early tradition according to which the Prophet ordered that the mosque of Medina should be no more than 'a booth like the booth of Moses . . . because the affair (will happen) sooner than that' (M. J. Kister, '"A booth like the booth of Moses . . . ": a study of an early *ḥadīth*', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 1962).

44. Not that there is early attestation of this. It is clear enough from Sebeos that the early Ishmaelite kings ruled from somewhere off-stage, and this can plausibly be located in Arabia (*Histoire*, p. 101, for Amr, and *ibid.*, p. 149, for a ruler identifiable as 'Uthmān); on the other hand it is striking that in an early Syriac reference to the battle of Ṣiffīn, the Abū Turāb whom Mu'āwiya defeated there is described as emir of Ḥīra (S. Brock, 'An early Syriac Life of Maximus the Confessor', *Analecta Bollandiana* 1973, pp. 313 = 319, with commentary at p. 329).

45. For the traditions of this type, see R. B. Serjeant, 'Ḥaram and Ḥawṭah', in *Mélanges Taha Husain*, Cairo 1962, p. 50.

46. Cf. the comment of Waraqa b. Nawfal on Muḥammad's first revelation there: 'There has come to you the greatest Law (*nāmūs*), which came to Moses' (Ibn Isḥāq, *Sīra*, pp. 154 = 107).

47. See *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*[2], art. 'Ḥajj', p. 32.

48. An earlier location outside the town is perhaps suggested by the Hispano-Arab chronicle which, in a passage referred to above (p. 22), describes Mecca as '*next to* a town in the desert'; compare the indications found in the Islamic tradition that the Ka'ba should be on a mountain (Wensinck, *The Navel of the Earth*, pp. 14f; we owe this point to Mr G. R. Hawting, who also pointed out the suggestiveness of the testimonia relating to the hill of Abū Qubays, and in particular to the presence on it of a *masjid Ibrāhīm*). If the 'house' remained on the mountain until a fairly late stage in the evolution of the Abrahamic sanctuary, this might help to explain why the early Christian references conspire to leave the town unnamed. For Jacob of Edessa on the Ka'ba, see above, p. 173, n. 30; the Khūzistānī

chronicle, in a passage referred to above (p. 174, n. 39), mentions several Arabian toponyms and devotes some lines to the 'dome of Abraham', but gives no location for it; Bar Penkāyē mentions the zeal of [Ibn] Zubayr for the 'house of God', his coming to a place in the south which was the Hagarene 'house of worship', and the burning of the latter in the ensuing hostilities, but again gives no toponym (Mingana, *Sources syriaques*, pp. *155 = *183). If a reflex of the move is to be sought in the Islamic tradition, the obvious candidate would be the inclusion of the *ḥijr* in the Ka'ba as reconstructed by Ibn al-Zubayr.

49. At Minā in the case of the *ḥajj* and at Marwa in the case of the '*umra*, sacrifice at Mount 'Arafāt having been discontinued in (classical) Islam; cf. the indications of the existence of a *bayt* at Marwa adduced in H. Lammens, 'Les sanctuaires préislamites dans l'Arabie occidentale', *Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph* 1926, pp. 52–4, 74. It is thus rather suggestive of an extra-urban location of the sanctuary that sacrifice *at* the sanctuary seems to figure as a basic rite in the Koran (5:96–8; 22:34; and cf. 48:25). Likewise the Khūzistānī chronicle in its account of the 'dome of Abraham' mentions that he built it to perform sacrifices, while Levond has Leo refer to 'the pagan altar of sacrifice which you call the house of Abr◦ham' ('Letter', tr. Patkanian, p. 55 = tr. Jeffery, p. 310).

50. In the case of Iran the cultural and religious distance precluded early and effective assimilation.

51. The Judaic high-priesthood did not have quite the same political character, since Judaism recognises the Davidic monarchy; and as an institution, it had been dead for centuries.

52. The fragmentary Maronite chronicle attests the fact that Mu'āwiya, despite his philo-Christian tour of Jerusalem, wore no crown (*Chronica Minora*, pp. 71 = 56).

53. We use 'imamate' rather than 'caliphate' since the former preserves better the priestly flavour of the office; but the original Hagarene term may well have been *khalīfa* rather than *imām*, cf. above, p. 28 and n. 70 thereto.

54. One implication of the analysis here advanced is that Quraysh (or the 'Alids) are to be regarded as a ritually inert equivalent of the Levitical (or Aaronid) priesthood. Cf. the residence of Quraysh at Abraham's sanctuary and of the 'Alids at Muḥammad's.

55. For a striking example see the chapter on the imamate in the eleventh-century legal handbook of Yūsuf b. Salāma al-'Askarī (S. Noja (tr.), *Il Kitāb al-Kāfī dei Samaritani*, Naples 1970, pp. 13–25).

56. Note the appearance of the greatest name of God as part of the content of this learning (J. Macdonald (ed. and tr.), *The Samaritan Chronicle no. II*, Berlin 1969, p. 105; al-Ḥasan b. Mūsā al-Nawbakhtī, *Kitāb firaq al-shī'a*, ed. H. Ritter, Istanbul 1931, p. 37).

57. The parallel is closest in the Imāmī case, where as among the Samaritans the office is passed from father to son.

58. See for example Nawbakhtī, *Kitāb firaq al-shī'a*, p. 16; Kister, 'Ḥaddithū', p. 223.

59. J. van Ess, 'Das *Kitāb al-irjā'* des Ḥasan b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya', *Arabica* 1974, p. 24. This text attributes to the Saba'iyya a form of religious authority based on the notions of esoteric knowledge and of the complete acceptance of the authority of a sacred lineage which they take as their *imām*.

60. The golden calf in the Koranic account (20:87ff) is the result of the efforts of a Samaritan who characteristically claims esoteric religious perception. (That the Koranic Sāmirī is indeed a Samaritan can hardly be doubted: the *lā misāsa* of 20:97 is a Samaritan theme already attested in pre-Islamic times, see A. Sharf, *Byzantine Jewry from Justinian to the Fourth Crusade*, London 1971, p. 44.) The occasion for this innovation in the Pentateuchal story is doubtless to be found in such Biblical references as the 'calf of Samaria' of Hosea 8:5f, but its point is otherwise obscure. Now in the context of the second civil war we have in the historiographical tradition the likewise obscure episode of the Tawwābūn, who repent of having followed the golden calf (see for example Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, II, p. 500), and duly go out to be slaughtered – one might add, by the Levites in the shape of the Umayyads (compare Exodus 32 and Koran 2:51). In the tradition as we have it, it is rather obscure why *failing* to fight for Ḥusayn should count as following the golden calf. Elsewhere, however, we find the golden calf identified with the 'Alids themselves (so Walīd II in Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, II, p. 1774). If this identification was in fact the original one, then the sin of the Tawwābūn must originally have been their espousal of the 'Alid cause rather than their failure to fight for it, which would lend more point to the designation than it now possesses; and at the same time, the Koranic role of the Samaritan in the making of the golden calf would appear as a reference to the historical role of the Samaritans in the making of the 'Alid high-priesthood. The significance of 'Alī's by-name Abū Turāb might then be sought in the handful of dust from which the calf was made (Koran 20:96).

61. Cf. above, p. 30.

62. It is also among the Khārijites of the second civil war that we hear of a sect, the Najdiyya, holding that scripture is enough and the imamate unnecessary (Nawbakhtī, *Kitāb firaq al-shī'a*, p. 10).

63. For the form, compare the monotheist confession (see above, p. 170, n. 3), and Ben-Ḥayyim, *Literary and Oral Tradition*, vol. iii, part two, pp. 41ff. For the high-priestly prerogative of judgment, see Ex. 28:30; *Memar Marqah*, p. 93; Macdonald, *The Samaritan Chronicle no. II*, p. 109. The *taḥkīm* appears on the coins of al-Qaṭarī b. al-Fujā'a, 688–97 (J. Walker, *A Catalogue of the Arab-Sassanian Coins*, London 1941, pp. 112f).

64. Cf. the identification of the two terms implicit in the tradition 'There is no mahdi but Jesus son of Mary' ('Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muḥammad ibn Khaldūn, *Maqaddima*, ed. M. Quatremère, vol. i, part two, Paris 1858, p. 163).

65. For attestations of the idea of a return of Moses in the Judaism of the period, see Lévi, 'L'apocalypse de Zorobabel', pp. 139 = 155, and above, p. 158, n. 46, where the redemptive role of the returning Moses is particularly striking. For the earlier history of the idea, see for example N. Wieder, 'The "Law interpreter" of the Sect of the Dead Sea Scrolls: The Second Moses', *Journal of*

Jewish Studies 1953. On the Islamic side there is some evidence to suggest that the mahdi was originally a returning Muḥammad. In the first place, this is the doctrine attributed to Ibn Saba' in Ṭabarī (*Ta'rīkh*, I, p. 2942), and it has as we have seen a good Judaic model; whereas the view of the heresiographers that it was 'Alī whose return he expected looks like an attempt to bring Saba'ism into line with later Shī'ism (see I. Friedlaender, ''Abdallāh b. Sabā, der Begründer der Šī'a, und sein jüdischer Ursprung', *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und verwandte Gebiete* 1909, for the various testimonies). Secondly, as Casanova pointed out, the curious principle that the mahdi must be a namesake of the Prophet makes sense if the mahdi was originally conceived as a returning Muḥammad (P. Casanova, *Mohammed et la fin du monde: étude critique sur l'Islam primitif*, Paris 1911, p. 58; Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya even has a daughter with the *kunya* Umm Abīhā, see Ibn Sa'd, *Kitāb al-ṭabaqāt*, vol. v, p. 67, and cf. below, note 69). Note also the explicit invocation of Mosaic precedent in the tradition referred to above (p. 154, n. 24) regarding 'Umar's belief in the occlusion and return of the Prophet.

66. 'Abbāsid conflation of imamic and mahdic claims is numismatically attested in 768: the coins on which the term *muslim* makes its first numismatic appearance (see above, p. 159, n. 50) refer to the heir-apparent as *al-imām al-Mahdī*.

67. Friedlaender, "Abdallāh b. Sabā'.

68. The only trace of the lay conception would be the account in the 'Secrets' of the great king who arises from Hazarmaweth (a son of Joktan) and is killed after a short reign by the strong men of the sons of Kedar (a son of Ishmael), see Lewis, 'Apocalyptic Vision', p. 325, with identification of the king as 'Alī at p. 328.

69. A degree of fidgeting with the kin relationship of the two men is suggested by the replication of Fāṭima as (a) grandmother of 'Alī and Muḥammad, (b) mother of 'Alī, and (c) daughter of Muḥammad and wife of 'Alī, the latter bearing the curious by-name Umm Abīhā.

70. The priestly character of the caliphate prior to this reinterpretation is suggested not only by the title *khalīfat allāh* (see the following note), but also by Koran 2:28–31: it is the possession of esoteric knowledge that justifies Adam's status as *khalīfa*.

71. The title *khalīfat rasūl allāh* is not attested by any early source. By contrast, *khalīfat allāh* appears on coins of *c.* 670–90 (J. Walker, *A Catalogue of the Arab-Byzantine and Post-Reform Umaiyad Coins*, London 1956, pp. 30f); it also occurs (unless we are to suspect later contamination) in the pre-Islamic Samaritan *Memar Marqah*, applied by the dying Moses to Eliezer (*hlyft yhwh*, pp. 121 = 199). The presumption is therefore that *khalīfat allāh* is primary.

72. Cf. the difficulty experienced by Christian sources which remember that the Prophet was alive when the conquests began in accommodating the reign of Abū Bakr (see the passages of Michael the Syrian and the 'Continuatio Byzantia Arabica' referred to above, p. 152, n. 7). The earliest references to Abū Bakr from outside the Islamic literary tradition occur in two Syriac sources dating from the

reign of Walīd I (the king-list published in J. P. N. Land (ed.), *Anecdota Syriaca*, vol. ii, Leyden 1868, p. 11 of the 'Addenda', and the chronicle of Jacob of Edessa, in *Chronica Minora*, pp. 327 = 251; for the date of Jacob's chronicle, see Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, vol. iv, p. 450 = vol. ii, p. 483).

NOTES TO CHAPTER 5

1. The inscriptions of the Dome of the Rock attest the messianic status of Jesus, the acceptance of the prophets, Muḥammad's receipt of revelation, and the use of the terms *islām* and *muslim* (Van Berchem, *Corpus*, part two, vol. ii, nos. 215, 217).

2. Note particularly the tradition that Walīd I wrote to *all* regions ordering the demolition and enlargement of the mosques (*Kitāb al-'uyūn wa'l-ḥadā'iq*, in M. de Goeje and P. de Jong (eds.), *Fragmenta Historicorum Arabicorum*, vol. i, Leyden 1869, p. 4).

3. Note also the extermination of the pig decreed by 'Abd al-Malik (see for example *Chronica Minora*, pp. 232 = 176).

4. We are indebted to Professor J. van Ess for making available to us the text of his unpublished paper 'Early development of kalām', read at the Colloquium on the Formative Period of Islamic History held at Oxford in July 1975, in which he summarised the results of his researches.

5. The reader of the following pages who is unfamiliar with the basic vocabulary of Judaism should note that Judaic learning is divided in *content* into halakha (law) and haggada (the rest), and in *form* into midrash (exposition of scripture) and mishna (oral tradition).

6. The *Memar Marqah* hardly represents a halakhic approach to the Pentateuch, and the literature of Samaritan law as it later appears in Arabic hardly suggests an entrenched and religiously prominent halakhic tradition.

7. Apart from the list of Muḥammad's prohibitions given by Sebeos (see above, p. 7), and occasional indications elsewhere of the content of Hagarene law, what the non-Islamic sources have to say about the overall character of this law is pretty well exhausted by three references: the insistence on the scriptural foundation of law in the dialogue between the patriarch and the emir (see above, p. 168, n. 20); Bar Penkaye's mention of the laws (*namose*) and oral tradition (*mashlmanuta*) of Muḥammad (Mingana, *Sources syriaques*, pp.* 146f = * 175); and the curious array of sources of law adduced by the monk of Bet Ḥale (see above, p. 167, n. 14).

8. J. Schacht, *The Origins of Muhammedan Jurisprudence*, Oxford 1950, pp. 190ff.

9. J. Schacht, *An Introduction to Islamic Law*, Oxford 1964, pp. 10–14.

10. On the Islamic side, we have the striking insistence on a scripturally based law in Koran 5:47–52; on the Christian side, we have the emir in his disputation with the patriarch demanding to be told the scriptural basis of Christian law (see above, p. 168, n. 20). In neither case is any mention made of the category of oral

tradition (cf. the curious scriptural status of the Koranic cognate of *mishnah* above, p. 167, n. 12). Note also that the alternative to Sachau's dating of Simeon of Rēwardashīr would place him in the mid-seventh century (cf. below, note 18).

11. Schacht, *Origins*, p. 99. It is thus by no means obvious that Schacht is right to derive the Islamic notion of the *ijmā'* of the scholars from a Roman *opinio prudentium* (*id.*, *Introduction*, p. 20) rather than from the comparable Judaic notions (see for example Babylonian Talmud, *Berakhot*, f. 9a, for the principle, and ff. 2a, 2b for applications). There is, of course, no lack of Judaic influence on the substantive law of Islam in its more religious aspects (see particularly A. J. Wensinck, 'Die Entstehung der muslimischen Reinheitsgesetzgebung', *Der Islam* 1914; we are indebted to Dr M. J. Kister for drawing our attention to this study). For what follows, see also above, pp. 37f.

12. Schacht, *Origins*, especially pp. 220f. Despite the paucity of evidence for the concrete character of inter-communal relations, the curious penumbra between Judaism and Islam attested by Shaybānī (see. I. Goldziher, 'Usages juifs d'après la littérature religieuse des musulmans', *Revue des études juives* 1894, pp. 91f) suggests one possible milieu for the transmission of ideas from the one to the other. Note also how the notion of *mukhālafat ahl al-kitāb* is in practice directed against the Jews, not the Christians (*ibid.*, p. 80).

13. *Sc.* both written and oral.

14. B. Gerhardsson, *Memory and Manuscript*, Uppsala 1961, p. 82n. Cf. also the idea that even the words of an astute pupil in the presence of his master are given on Sinai (*ibid.*, p. 173n).

15. Schacht, *Origins*, pp. 44, 76; cf. also pp. 70, 72 on Awzā'ī. Contrast the insistence of Shāfi'ī that opinions not actually transmitted from the Prophet may not be regarded as implicitly going back to him (*ibid.*, 17).

16. Schacht, *Origins*, pp. 224–7.

17. Thus despite the fact that the ordinance of Koran 60:10 constitutes the classical and unchallenged scriptural basis of the prohibition of the marriage of Muslim women to non-Muslims, Ibn Mas'ūd is recorded as merely *imploring* his sister to marry a Muslim, be he a red Rūmī or a black Ḥabashī, without reference to this or any other Koranic sanction ('Abdallāh b. Aḥmad ibn Qudāma, *Kitāb al-mughnī*, ed. M. Rashīd Riḍā, Cairo 1922–30, vol. vii, p. 372). Equally it is hard to imagine how the self-satisfaction of the *ḥadīth* in its espousal of the stoning penalty for adultery against Jewish deviation from their own scripture could ever have arisen in a milieu which knew the Koran and its clear requirement of flagellation (cf. G. Vajda, 'Juifs et musulmans selon le ḥadīṯ', *Journal asiatique* 1937, pp. 93–9); whence the drastic character of the remedy subsequently attempted, the invention of a Koranic sanction for stoning allegedly omitted from the codex.

18. Two Nestorian legal works from Fārs, the first definitely and the second tentatively dated by their editor to the second half of the eighth century (Sachau, *Syrische Rechtsbücher*, vol. iii, pp. ix (Isho'bokht), xixf (Simeon of Rēwardashīr)), contain apologetic introductions on the status of Christian law (*dine*) (pp. 2–23,

210–35). The general polemical context is clear from Isho'bokht's citation of the claim of the Jews and *ḥanpe* (here presumably the Muslims) that the Christians have no *dine* (pp. 20 = 21). While Isho'bokht's tendency is rather to assert the native antinomianism of Christianity and thus to deny the need for a specifically Christian civil law (see for example the passage just referred to, and compare Patriarch Timothy's introduction to his law-book of 805, *ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 54 = 55), Simeon's tendency is more obviously syncretic: he presents what was substantially a profane legal heritage as formally Christian oral tradition (*ibid.*, vol. iii, pp. 233 = 232–4), and explicitly defends this oral as opposed to scriptural foundation of Christian law (pp. 231–3 = 230–4). Compare also the concern with the sources of Christian law among the Elamites in the same period (O. Braun (ed. and tr.), *Timothei Patriarchae I Epistulae, I* (= CSCO, *Scriptores Syri*, vols. xxxf), Louvain 1914f, pp. 102–6 = 67–9; the letter in question is dated to the years 795–8 in R. J. Bidawid, *Les lettres du patriarche nestorien Timothée I*, Rome 1956, p. 74). There is no trace of any such concern in the two pre-eighth-century works published by Sachau.

19. Schacht, *Origins*, pp. 40f (citing Shāfi'ī on the *ahl al-ḳalām*); J. van Ess, 'Ein unbekanntes Fragment des Naẓẓām', in *Der Orient in der Forschung: Festschrift für Otto Spies*, Wiesbaden 1967.

20. This chain is set out in the Mishnaic tractate *Abot*.

21. See Abraham ibn Daud, *The Book of Tradition*, ed. and tr. G. D. Cohen, London 1967, especially the editor's introduction.

22. This activity is not of course unrepresented in the Mishna itself.

23. A. Paul, *Ecrits de Qumran et sectes juives aux premiers siècles de l'Islam: Recherches sur l'origine du Qaraisme*, Paris 1969.

24. We assume Mu'tazilism to have been in the first instance a style of theology and only secondarily an attitude to the sources of law. With a more cavalier attitude to the historicity of the Islamic sources, one could of course invert the sequence: compare the term *i'tizāl* with the insistence of 'Anan that his followers separate (*prš*) themselves from those around them (N. Wieder, *The Judean Scrolls and Karaism*, London 1962, pp. 154f; cf. a tenth-century rabbinic reference to the 'separatists (*muvdele*) of the children of Israel' who make a covenant with the 'separatists of the children of Ishmael' regarding the beginning of the month, J. Mann in *Hebrew Union College Annual* 1937f, pp. 442 = 422); and note how for Ibn Qutayba, as not for Shāfi'ī, the Mu'tazila have become *ahl al-naẓar* who engage in the rationalist criticism of traditions (Schacht, *Origins*, p. 45).

25. But only just: note how Binyāmin al-Nahāwandī, in the generation before Karaism developed its neo-Qumranic character, was slipping back into the familiar grooves of rabbinic law (Paul, *Ecrits de Qumran*, p. 87).

26. For the failure to develop a concrete Mu'tazilite law, see Schacht, *Origins*, p. 258.

27. Schacht, *Origins*, p. 259; cf. also J. van Ess, 'Ḍirār b. 'Amr und die "Cahmiya". Biographie einer vergessenen Schule', *Der Islam* 1968, pp. 43–6.

28. The equivalence is not merely conceptual: whereas the mishna of the Muslims 'leans' on a chain of authorities (*isnād*), that of the Jews 'leans' on a Biblical verse (*asmakhta*) (J. Horovitz, 'Alter und Ursprung des Isnād', *Der Islam* 1918, p. 47).

29. Unless of course the Karaite movement, despite its Judaic doctrinal antecedents, was precipitated by Islamic influence (cf. above, p. 38).

30. Schacht, *Origins*, p. 28.

31. It can be presented as a decision to apply across the board the mishnaic notion of a Mosaic halakha from Sinai (W. Bacher, *Tradition und Tradenten in den Schulen Palästinas und Babyloniens*, Leipzig 1914, chapter 3), in combination with the talmudic maxim that 'if you can trace back the chain of authorities to Moses, do so' (Horovitz, 'Alter und Ursprung des Isnād', p. 46). It can even be seen as the culmination of trends already at work among the rabbis (for the amoraic tendency to extend the domain of application of the idea of a Mosaic halakha from Sinai, see Bacher, *Tradition und Tradenten*, pp. 41f; for the touching-up of two of the three specific Mosaic *isnād*s of the Mishna in Tosefta and Talmud, *ibid.*, pp. 25f; for the improvement of the general *isnād* of *Abot* in the later *Abot de Rabbi Natan*, *ibid.*, p. 27). But it remains that the notion of a Mosaic halakha from Sinai was basically a last resort of the rabbis when the resources of scripture had failed them (*ibid.*, pp. 34f), and that the few Mosaic *isnād*s which the rabbis concocted look pretty forlorn by the standards of Islamic *isnād*-criticism.

32. J. D. Purvis, *The Samaritan Pentateuch and the Origin of the Samaritan Sect*, Cambridge, Mass. 1968.

33. *Chronica Minora*, pp. 71 = 56. Cf. the accounts in the Islamic tradition of his attempt to remove the *minbar* of the Prophet to Syria (G. R. Hawting, 'The Umayyads and the Ḥijāz', in *Proceedings of the Fifth Seminar for Arabian Studies*, London 1972, pp. 42f).

34. For the extent of other Umayyad building activity in Jerusalem, see M. Ben-Dov, 'The Omayyad Structures near the Temple Mount', published with B. Mazar, 'The Excavations in the Old City of Jerusalem near the Temple Mount', Jerusalem 1971.

35. Cf. the snide observation of the astrologers reported by Bīrūnī that the authority of the 'Abbāsid caliph had become purely spiritual in the manner of the Jewish Exilarch (W. Madelung, 'The Assumption of the Title Shāhanshāh by the Būyids and "The Reign of Daylam (*Dawlat al-Daylam*)"', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 1969 *bis*, p. 98).

36. See for example I. Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, London 1967, 1971, vol. ii, pp. 93–7. There could hardly be a more appropriate destruction of the category of redemption than the account given by Muslim writers of God's justification to Moses of the length of Pharoah's reign: 'during his rule he keeps the roads safe', etc. (A. K. S. Lambton, 'Islamic Mirrors for Princes', in *Atti del Convegno Internazionale sul tema: La Persia nel Medioevo*, Rome 1971, pp. 435, 437).

37. Cf. above, p. 24, and n. 37 thereto.

8. But not of course in the Imāmī case, where the restoration of the ghetto is ›mplete: one tenth-century Imāmī writer even contrives to bend the notion of *ijra* to refer it to the action of the Hāshimids in joining the Prophet during the :olonged state of siege to which he was subjected in the precincts of 'Abd al-Muṭṭalib in Mecca (E. Kohlberg, *The Attitude of the Imāmī-Shī'is to the Com-mions of the Prophet*, Oxford Ph.D. 1971, p. 94).

9. E. Kohlberg, 'The Development of the Imāmī Shī'ī Doctrine of *jihād*', *eitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 1976.

0. Even the cheerfully adaptive quietism of Pollio and Sameas had turned ı the fact that Herod was an Edomite (E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish :ople in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.–A.D. 135)*, revised by G. Vermes and Millar, vol. i, Edinburgh 1973, p. 296).

1. The equation of the two in the Islamic category of *maks* has excellent ıdaic antecedents (cf. *ibid.*, p. 376n).

2. I.e. detaining the army in the field, especially over winter. Characteristically is the grievances of the conquerors, not those of the conquered, that place the oral status of the conquest in jeopardy.

3. Compared to the dimensions of pro-'Alid sentiment in Islam, those of pro-mayyad sentiment are derisory: a matter of such oddities as the Nābita (W. adelung, *Der Imam al-Qāsim ibn Ibrāhīm und die Glaubenslehre der Zaiditen*, rlin 1965, Exkurs I), the Yezidis, and the Marwānites of Central Asia (V. V. rtol'd, 'Musul'manskaya sekta mervanitov', *Izvestiya Imperatorskoy Akademii auk* 1915).

4. Except of course in the case of the Imāmīs, who are not their own jailors and have a past to mourn: because the imamate can be seen as the victim of over-helming external malice, it is also what the mahdi, by virtue of his identity with e last imam, will restore.

5. Nau, 'Révélations et légendes', p. 437.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 6

Note for example the determination of Marxism to generate out of the jective logic of its impersonal concepts the subjective solidarity of a chosen ass. But then this whole system is a precarious fusion of the conceptual legacy Greece with the redemptive legacy of Israel.

See particularly M. L. West, *Early Greek Philosophy and the Orient*, xford 1971.

Ahura Mazdā is thus a doctrinal invention as Yahweh is a contractual rrowing: it would seem that ethnic Gods do not come altogether naturally.

The phrase in fact appears in the Elamite version of the Behistūn inscription H. Weissbach, *Die Keilinschriften der Achämeniden*, Leipzig 1911, pp. 64–7; e owe this reference to Professor J. M. Cook).

The activities of Kartīr would appear to be the exception. Most attempts to

convert what we would regard as non-Iranians relate to Armenia, and the key to this is presumably, politics aside, the earlier Iranicisation of the country.

6. Manichaeism is the most consistently cosmopolitan of all faiths; but where metaphor was enough to generate Pauline Christianity, Mani had to reject matter, to transpose the beauty of Ahura Mazdā's creation into demonic excrement, in order to purge dualism of its Iranian identification (G. Widengren, *Mani and Manichaeism*, London 1965, p. 55).

7. For Xerxes and the *daivadāna*, see R. G. Kent, *Old Persian: Grammar, Texts, Lexicon*, New Haven, 1950, p. 151; for the Sasanid period, R. C. Zaehner, *Zurvan: A Zoroastrian Dilemma*, Oxford 1955, pp. 25, 53.

8. G. Rawlinson, *The Five Great Monarchies of the Ancient Eastern World*[2], London 1871, vol. iii, p. 164n.

9. The Zoroastrian sanctification of social structure is not of course so single-minded as the Hindu. It would have come very oddly in the Iranian context to have equated orthodoxy with the acceptance of Aryan social structure; and Mazdakites could denounce this social structure in the name of Zoroaster as dissident Indians could hardly do in the name of the Vedas.

10. See for example Kent, *Old Persian*, pp. 117 = 119, 129 = 131.

11. Suppose an earlier and more sustained Persian threat had shaped the lives of a more substantial part of the Greek population: might not such intellectual tendencies as the theistic emphasis on the justice of Zeus and the rather Zoroaster-like mission of Heraclitus (West, *Early Greek Philosophy*, pp. 192f) have fused with such political effects of the Persian invasions as the incipient discredit of the Delphic oracle and incipient unification in the shape of the Delian League? But the fact remains that when the Greeks eventually opted for theism, they had to import Yahweh rather than resuscitate Zeus; just as when Byzantium eventually became the metropolis of a Greek empire, it did so as a new Rome rather than a new Athens.

12. There was plenty of ethnic chauvinism to find expression in Aristotle's view that barbarians were natural slaves; but it was a scientifically weak and historically self-defeating position, whereas the divine election of the Aryans was a religiously strong and historically self-reinforcing tenet.

13. Though Fārābī believed that it had, and equally traced its origins to Mesopotamia: both moves which, whatever their historical inaccuracy, are conceptually apt (R. Walzer, *L'Eveil de la philosophie islamique*, Paris 1971, p. 19).

14. As Epicurus memorably expressed it, 'the things which I know, the multitude disapproves, and of what the multitude approves, I know nothing' (E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational*, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1951, p. 241). The commitment of the philosophical elite to the conceptual conquest of the masses is historically a very recent phenomenon.

15. It comes closest to becoming so in Plato's response to the threat of popular democracy and Julian the Apostate's to that of popular Christianity.

16. It is of course also true that the Platonic republic, after its Zaydī mis-

adventure in Syracuse, was already deposited by its founder in a *ghayba* from which the intermittent efforts of a Fārābī or a Plethon did not suffice to bring about its return. But if Plato came to be above politics, it was the politics of the city state that he was above.

17. The Iranian equivalent to the Romans is thus the Mazdakites: the Romans illustrate the risk one takes in telling one's truths to one's neighbours, the Mazdakites the risk one takes in telling them to one's masses.

18. Marcionism, had it prevailed, would have freed Christianity from the incubus of its Judaic scriptures; compare the cultural role of Zen Buddhism in China. And indeed the Zen injunction to kill the Buddha should you meet him finds its Christian resonance in Luther's recommendation that that we should beat Moses to death and throw many stones at him (for these murderous intents, see K. K. S. Ch'en, *The Chinese Transformation of Buddhism*, Princeton, N. J. 1973, p. 11, and P. D. L. Avis, 'Moses and the Magistrate: a Study in the rise of Protestant Legalism', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 1975, p. 152). But for all Luther's table talk, the Christian decision against Marcion was early and irreversible.

19. J. M. Hussey, *Church and Learning in the Byzantine Empire 867–1185*, New York 1963, pp. 91, 94, 112.

20. The change of usage in the last century of Byzantine history merely relocated the problem: if the Byzantine Christians were Hellenes, it was only logical of Plethon to return to paganism (see S. Runciman, *The Last Byzantine Renaissance*, Cambridge 1970, pp. 14–23).

21. The one field in which Latin compelled attention was of course law: contrast the fourth-century problem of keeping legal Latinity in the east within bounds with the eleventh-century problem of reviving it (J. H. W. G. Liebeschuetz, *Antioch: City and Imperial Administration in the Later Roman Empire*, Oxford 1972, pp. 242–55; Hussey, *Church and Learning*, p. 56).

NOTES TO CHAPTER 7

1. Cf. the contempt which the Hellenised authors of the *Corpus Hermeticum* evince for the masses while at the same time retaining all their contempt for the Greeks (P. Derchain in P. Grimal *et al.*, *Hellenism and the Rise of Rome*, London 1968, p. 217).

2. For a perceptive account of these changes see P. Brown, *The World of Late Antiquity*, London 1971.

3. O. Seeck, *Die Briefe des Libanius zeitlich geordnet*, Leipzig 1906, *s.n.* Eutropius V.

4. Eunapius, *Lives of the Philosophers*, ed. and tr. E. H. Warmington and W. Wright, London 1968, pp. 352ff.

5. Cf. the lack of interest in converting the barbarians beyond the imperial frontiers (E. A. Thompson, 'Christianity and the Northern Barbarians', in A.

Momigliano (ed.), *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century*, Oxford 1963, p. 64); it is particularly striking that the attempt to export Christian truth in such a fashion appeared as a category mistake even to an Arian (*ibid.*, p. 69).

6. Cf. the key role of the emperor in the development of conciliar decision procedures.

7. Cf. Ephraem the Syrian's insistence that the yoke of the faith is one and the same for the learned and the ignorant, the astute and the simple (E. Beck, *Die Theologie des Hl. Ephraem in seinen Hymnen über den Glauben* (= Studia Anselmiana, fasc. xxi), Rome 1949, p. 64).

8. Cf. P. Brown, 'Christianity and Local Culture in Late Roman Africa', *Journal of Roman Studies* 1968, p. 90.

9. M.-L. Chaumont, 'Recherches sur le clergé zoroastrien: le hērbad', *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 1960, pp. 71–6.

10. P. Lacau, 'Un graffito égyptien d'Abydos écrit en lettres grecques', *Etudes de papyrologie* 1934.

11. P. Jouguet, 'Le roi Hurgonaphor et les révoltes de la Thébaïde', in *Mélanges O. Navarre*, Toulouse 1935, pp. 265–73.

12. C. Préaux, 'Esquisse d'une histoire des révolutions égyptiennes sous les Lagides', *Chronique d'Egypte* 1936.

13. W. Tarn and G. T. Griffith, *Hellenistic Civilisation*[3], London 1966, pp. 205f.

14. R. MacMullen, 'Nationalism in Roman Egypt', *Aegyptus* 1964, pp. 183f; Palladius, *The Paradise or Garden of the Holy Fathers*, tr. E. A. W. Budge, London 1907, vol. i, pp. 114, 134, 135.

15. A. H. M. Jones, *The Cities of the Eastern Roman Provinces*[2], Oxford 1971, pp. 295ff; H. I. Bell, "Hellenic Culture in Egypt', *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 1922, pp. 146f.

16. For the administration of Roman Egypt see Jones, *Cities*, pp. 314ff.

17. M. Rostovtzeff, *Rome*, London 1960, p. 225.

18. W. Otto, *Priester und Tempel im hellenistischen Ägypten*, Leipzig and Berlin 1905–8, vol. i, pp. 58ff, 403ff.

19. J. G. Milne, *A History of Egypt under Roman Rule*[3], London 1924, p. 52.

20. *Asclepius*, chapters 24f, in A. D. Nock and A.-J. Festugière (ed. and tr.), *Corpus Hermeticum*, Paris 1945–54, vol. ii, pp. 326–9.

21. E. Iversen, 'Fragments of a Hieroglyphic Dictionary', *Historisk-filologiske Skrifter Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab* 1958; P. Scott-Moncrieff, *Paganism and Christianity in Egypt*, Cambridge 1913, p. 23.

22. L. Kákosy, 'Prophecies of Ram Gods', *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 1966; MacMullen, 'Nationalism in Roman Egypt', pp. 184f.

23. Antinoopolis is the only exception (Jones, *Cities*, p. 311).

24. There is no evidence of Alexandrian hostility after the *Acts of the Pagan Martyrs* (ed. H. A. Musurillo, Oxford 1954), cf. A. H. M Jones, 'Were Ancient Heresies National or Social Movements in Disguise?', *Journal of Theological Studies* 1959, pp. 286f.

25. W. H. C. Frend, *Martyrdom and Persecution in the Early Church*, Oxford 1965, pp. 539ff; R. MacMullen, 'Provincial Languages in the Roman Empire', *American Journal of Philology* 1966, pp. 10f; H. I. Bell, *Jews and Christians in Egypt*, Oxford 1924, chapter 2.

26. Brown, *The World of Late Antiquity*, pp. 96ff.

27. A pagan grammarian and priest of Thoth who fought against the Christians in Alexandria, see Seeck, *Briefe, s.n.* Ammonius II.

28. For St Anthony as a schoolboy, see S. Athanasius, 'Vita S. Antonii', in *PG*, vol. xxvi, col. 841. For his later equation of paganism and Greek philosophy, see below, p. 189, n. 60.

29. Palladius, *Paradise*, vol. i, p. 181.

30. Cf. Paul the Hermit's impressive display of ignorance to St Anthony: are there still cities in the world, still kings, and are governors still subject to the errors of the devil? (Palladius, *Paradise*, vol. i, p. 200).

31. D. Chitty, *The Desert a City*, Oxford 1966, p. 4; Palladius, *Paradise*, vol. i, pp. 236ff; cf. A. F. Shore, 'Christian and Coptic Egypt', in J. R. Harris (ed.), *The Legacy of Egypt*[2], Oxford 1971, pp. 402f.

32. Shore, 'Christian and Coptic Egypt', pp. 405, 408; F. R. Farag, *Sociological and Moral Studies in the Field of Coptic Monasticism*, Leyden 1964, pp. 11–35; P. van Cauwenbergh, *Etudes sur les moines d'Egypte depuis le concile de Chalcedone (451) jusqu'à l'invasion arabe (640)*, Paris 1914, pp. 159, 172.

33. Palladius, *Paradise*, vol. i, pp. 291–3, 301–4; Chitty, *The Desert a City*, pp. 20ff.

34. Palladius, *Paradise*, vol. i, pp. 169, 175, 326, 334, 356 etc.

35. *Ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 371f.

36. Cf. *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 344: 'and the word of the Prophet concerning the church among the gentiles was fulfilled and was completed also by the desert of Egypt, for the sons of God were more numerous there than in the land which had become settled and occupied by people'.

37. *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 333; cf. the story of Paesius and Isaiah, *ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 108f, and the monks who find men more pious than themselves among the tailors or herdsmen of some village, *ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 149–51.

38. For the diocese and the direct jurisdiction of the Patriarch over his bishops, cf. E. R. Hardy, *Christian Egypt, Church and People*, New York 1952, pp. 108f.

39. Meletius was bishop of Lycopolis in Upper Egypt, not Patriarch of Alexandria; for his monastic support, see Bell, *Jews and Christians*, pp. 38ff; Frend, *Martyrdom*, p. 540.

40. Frend, *Martyrdom*, p. 541; the alliance is neatly symbolised by the alleged appearance of Shenute with Cyril at Ephesus in 431 (Shore, 'Christian and Coptic Egypt', p. 413).

41. W. H. C. Frend, *The Rise of the Monophysite Movement*, Cambridge 1972.

42. K. J. von Hefele, *Histoire des conciles*, tr. H. Leclercq, Paris 1907–52, vol. ii, part one, pp. 584ff.

43. E. L. Woodward, *Christianity and Nationalism in the Later Roman Empire*, London 1916, p. 42. The Pharaonic nickname of the Alexandrian patriarchs is of course usually abusive, cf. the accusation that Dioscorus thought that he rather than the prefect was the real ruler of Egypt (Hardy, *Christian Egypt*, p. 112); but what was a tyrant to the heretics was a hero to the orthodox.

44. Jones, *Cities*, pp. 327ff.

45. Hardy, *Christian Egypt*, pp. 110, 122.

46. *Id.*, *The Large Estates of Byzantine Egypt*, New York 1931.

47. Cf. the nobles and officials who constituted the following of the Melkite Proterius (Frend, *Monophysite Movement*, p. 155) as against the Ammon who renounced his wealth in Nitria in early times (Palladius, *Paradise*, vol. i, p. 377); but Ammon of course belonged to a period before Monophysite cenobitism had softened the division between holiness and the world.

48. For this family see Hardy, *Large Estates*, chapter 2; for their estates in Oxyrhynchus, Cynopolis, Arsinois etc., their *bucellarii*, private prisons, postal service, racing stables, banks, tax-collectors, secretaries, officials etc., *ibid.*, index *s.v.* 'Apion estate', and H. I. Bell, *Egypt from Alexander the Great to the Arab Conquest*, Oxford 1948, pp. 122f.

49. Severus dedicated a book to Apion (Hardy, *Christian Egypt*, p. 122), but Apion converted to Chalcedonianism in 518, and his son Strategius was still a Chalcedonian in 533 (*ibid.*, p. 134); but they were Monophysites again by 616 when Strategius III played a leading role in the negotiations leading to the reconciliation of the Syrian and Egyptian patriarchs (*ibid.*, p. 158). Their Chalcedonianism coincided with the peak in their accumulation of central offices (*id.*, *Large Estates*, p. 36).

50. Hardy, *Large Estates*, pp. 140–4.

51. Palladius, *Paradise*, vol. i, p. 361.

52. Cf. the many legacies to the church (Hardy, *Christian Egypt*, p. 167); the warm relations between the congregation and the 'princes and officers' of Oxyrhynchus (Palladius, *Paradise*, vol. i, p. 338); and the Duke of the Thebaid who sympathised with the Coptic church in the days in Justinian (Hardy, *Christian Egypt*, p. 142; he might of course have been an Apion).

53. H. L. Jansen (ed. and tr.), *The Coptic Story of Cambyses' Invasion of Egypt*, Oslo 1950, p. 64. The fact that a village featuring in a Coptic hagiography is casually referred to as having been burnt down by Cambyses suggests that he still enjoyed a certain popular notoriety (O. von Lemm, 'Kleine Koptische Studien', no. xviii, in *Izvestiya Imperatorskoy Akademii Nauk* 1900, p. 64).

54. Severus ibn al-Muqaffa', *History of the Patriarchs*, in *Patrologia Orientalis*, vol. i, p. 498.

55. Ziadeh, 'L'Apocalypse de Samuel', pp. 379 = 395.

56. Egypt has become the seat of God, the angels and the saints of the whole world, and there will be nothing like it until the end of time (H. Fleisch (ed. and tr.), 'Une homélie copte de Théophile d'Alexandrie', *Revue de l'orient chrétien* 1935f, pp. 383 = 382); most saints have either been Egyptians or Egypt has attracted them there, thus Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Jeremiah, John the Baptist and St Anthony; for where does the sun shine if not in Egypt, and in what should we glory if not in that which is our own? (G. Garitte, 'Panégyrique de Saint Antoine par Jean, évêque d'Hermopolis', *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 1943, pp. 119–21).

57. *Asclepius*, chapter 24, in Nock and Festugière, *Corpus Hermeticum*, p. 327.

58. Coptic doxology for the Feast of the Entry of Our Lord into the Land of Egypt, cited in O. E. A. Meinardus, *In the Steps of the Holy Family from Bethlehem to Upper Egypt*, Cairo 1963, p. 15.

59. W. Kosack, *Die Legende im Koptischen*, Bonn 1970, pp. 80ff.

60. As against the Hellenised elite who could read Homer, Anacreon, Menander and the like in the sixth-century deep south (J. Maspero, 'Un dernier poète grec d'Egypte: Dioscore fils d'Apollôs', *Revue des études grecques* 1911), we have St Anthony who despised paganism as derived from Greek philosophy which inspired no martyrs and asked questions instead of answering them (Frend, *Monophysite Movement*, p. 72), Shenute's contempt for Greek thinkers (*ibid.*) and things Greek in general (J. Leipoldt, *Schenute von Atripe*, Leipzig 1903, pp. 71ff); cf. also the equation of paganism *tout court* with Alexandrian devilry in Palladius, *Paradise*, vol. i, p. 199, and the devil who insists on swearing by Jupiter and Hercules (*ibid.*, pp. 128, 194).

61. Cf. Philoponus' argument in the Monophysite interest that the king is not the image of God and that government rests upon the free will of the governed (Frend, *Monophysite Movement*, p. 59).

62. Cf. *Asclepius*, chapter 24, in Nock and Festugière, *Corpus Hermeticum*, p. 326, and Derchain in Grimal, *Hellenism and the Rise of Rome*, p. 217.

63. Cf. above, p. 115.

64. A. T. Olmstead, *History of Assyria*, London and New York 1923, p. 640.

65. S. K. Eddy, *The King is Dead: Studies in Near Eastern Resistance to Hellenism 334–31 B.C.*, Lincoln, Neb. 1961, p. 102.

66. W. Andrae, *Das wiedererstandene Assur*, Leipzig 1938, p. 169; M. Meuleau in Grimal, *Hellenism and the Rise of Rome*, pp. 272, 273.

67. Cf. the continued use of the old Assyrian names (S. Smith, 'Notes on the "Assyrian Tree"', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies* 1926, p. 69).

68. Andrae, *Assur*, pp. 171ff.

69. The lifespan of this kingdom was hardly much shorter than that of the Parthians. It appears for the first time as a kingdom of some age in A.D. 44 when

king Izates II converted to Judaism (P. Kahle, *The Cairo Geniza*, London 1947, pp. 184ff); and though Trajan briefly incorporated it in the Roman Empire as the province of Assyria (*Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*², ed. G. Wissowa, Stuttgart 1893–, *s.v.* 'Adiabene'), later kings appear in Syriac sources (Mšiḥa-Zkha in Mingana, *Sources syriaques*, pp. 25, 28 = 101f, 105), and Arabic sources imply that it was finally destroyed by Ardashīr (J. Marquart, *Osteuropäische und ostasiatische Streifzüge*, Leipzig 1903, p. 299n; cf. Mšiḥa-Zkha in Mingana, *Sources syriaques*, pp. 31 = 108). For the Assyrian identification of the kingdom, see the 'Doctrine of Addai' in W. Cureton (ed. and tr.), *Ancient Syriac Documents*, London and Edinburgh 1864, pp. 15 = 16, where the disciples of Addai return to 'their own country of the Assyrians' in the time of Narsai 'the king of the Assyrians'; cf. also *ibid.*, pp. 34 = 34.

70. A Sasanid prince henceforth held the title of king of Adiabene, thus Ardashīr II before his accession (A. Christensen, *L'Iran sous les Sassanides*², Copenhagen 1944, pp. 102, 312).

71. In the days of Shāpūr when princes were everywhere called kings there was one Pulat in the province of Darsus (Hoffmann, *Auszüge*, pp. 9f); at the time of Julian the Apostate there was one Sanḥerib, king of Athor, a Magian whose son converted to Christianity (P. Bedjan (ed.), *Acta Martyrum et Sanctorum*, Paris 1890–7, vol. ii, p. 401 = Hoffmann, *Auszüge*, p. 17); Mar Kardag, of great royal race, a descendant of Nimrod and Sennacherib, held the office of marzban of Assyria for the Sasanids until his conversion (J. B. Abbeloos (ed. and tr.), 'Acta Mar Kardaghi', *Analecta Bollandiana* 1890, pp. 12ff; cf. also below, p. 192, n. 99).

72. Cf. the reaction of the Persian nobility to Izates' conversion: they asked Vologeses for a Parthian prince as their king had abolished their ancestral customs (Marquart, *Streifzüge*, pp. 292–5).

73. In Babylon Ahura Mazdā was identified with Bel, and similar expedients were presumably adopted in Assyria.

74. Note how the Sennacheribid Kardag is invited to the Persian court by Shāpūr II before his appointment as marzban (Abbeloos, 'Acta Mar Kardaghi', pp. 13–15).

75. Unless of course they went Manichean, as indeed many of them did (cf. A. Vööbus, *History of Asceticism in the Syrian Orient* (= CSCO, Subsidia, vols. xiv, xvii), Louvain 1958–60, vol. i, pp. 158f); but a doctrine so hostile to matter was unlikely to retain the allegiances of men so attached to it once Christianity became available.

76. Judaism, another ethnic faith, was unlikely to be successful in the long run: Izates and his family escaped the Persians, but ended up in Jerusalem. For the spread of Christianity see J. M. Fiey, *Jalons pour une histoire de l'église en Iraq* (= CSCO, Subsidia, vol. xxxvi), Louvain 1970, pp. 32ff; for the doctrinal and jurisdictional separation from the west, *ibid.*, pp. 66ff, 113ff.

77. Fiey, *Jalons*, pp. 55–65.

78. A. R. Bellinger, 'Hyspaosines of Charax', *Yale Classical Studies* 1942;

Pauly-Wissowa, *Realencyclopädie*, *s.v.* 'Mesene'; cf. H. H. Schaeder, 'Ḥasan al-Baṣrī', *Der Islam* 1923, pp. 4ff. Under the Sasanids princes of the house held the title of Mēshānshāh (Christensen, *Iran*, p. 102).

79. Cf. the Babylonian kings of the Parthian period who appear in Ibn Waḥshiyya (D. Chwolson, *Über die Überreste der altbabylonischen Literatur in arabischen Übersetzung*, St Petersburg 1859, p. 137) and Mas'ūdī (Abū 'l-Ḥasan 'Alī b. al-Ḥusayn al-Mas'ūdī, *Kitāb murūj al-dhahab*, ed. and tr. A. C. Barbier de Meynard and A. J.-B. Pavet de Courteille, Paris 1861–77, vol. ii, p. 161).

80. It is implied in Isho'dad's story of Nabu (van den Eynde, *Commentaire, I. Genèse* (= CSCO, Scriptores Syri, vols. lxvii, lxxv), Louvain 1950, 1955, pp. 6 = 7). But geographically, Mesene was not Babylon, only its neighbour, and though the kings did hold both Seleucia and Babylon for a while, typically even the Parthians could not allow them to retain them.

81. On the pagan side Ibn Waḥshiyya fails to remember any genuine Babylonian kings, and remembers the spurious ones primarily as sages and wise men (Chwolson, *Überreste*, *passim*); on the Persian side the *kāvīs* tend to take over the political deeds of the genuine kings (A. Christensen, *Les Kayanides*, Copenhagen 1931, pp. 93ff, 119; H. Lewy, 'The Babylonian Background of the Kay Kâûs Legend', *Archiv Orientalní* 1949, pp. 29–33).

82. J. Bidez, 'Les écoles chaldéennes sous Alexandre et les Séleucides', *Annuaire de l'Institut de philologie et d'histoire orientales* 1935.

83. Or in other words, there was no such thing as a community of Babylonian Christians: lower Iraq simply happened to be the centre of the Christian mission in the Persian Empire and beyond. Compare the absence of an ethnic when Aggai is said to convert all the Assyrians and 'the areas around Babylon' (Cureton, *Ancient Syriac Documents*, pp. 34 = 34), and Kindī's reference to the Christians of lower Iraq as 'mongrels by the Chaldean delta' (W. Muir, *The Apology of Al Kindy*, London 1882, pp. 33f).

84. For the origins of the identification of things Chaldean and Magian, see J. Bidez and F. Cumont, *Les mages hellénisés*, Paris 1938, vol. i, pp. 34f; for its persistence in the Christian east, *ibid.*, pp. 42ff.

85. The late-sixth-century Ḥenana was a Chaldean, meaning a determinist (Babai, *Liber de unione*, ed. and tr. A. Vaschalde (= CSCO, Scriptores Syri, vols. xxxivf), Louvain 1953, pp. 109 = 77); the home of Giwargis, a Christian convert, was Chaldea in Babel where demons and created things are worshipped (Hoffmann, *Auszüge*, p. 93).

86. Bedjan, *Acta Martyrum*, vol. ii, p. 507 = Hoffmann, *Auszüge*, p. 43; compare the role of Hūd among Yemeni Muslims.

87. P. Krüger, 'Die Regenbitten Aphrem des Syrers', *Oriens Christianus* 1933, pp. 35f; J. M. Fiey, *Assyrie chrétienne*, vol. iii, Beirut 1968, p. 20.

88. Marquart, *Streifzüge*, pp. 296 ff.

89. Bedjan, *Acta Martyrum*, vol. ii, p. 509 = Hoffmann, *Auszüge*, p. 44 (on pp. 507 and 43 respectively it is Sardana who founds it).

90. Bedjan, *Acta Martyrum*, vol. ii, p. 512 = Hoffmann, *Auszüge*, p. 46.

91. Bedjan, *Acta Martyrum*, vol. ii, p. 507 = Hoffmann, *Auszüge*, p. 43.

92. E. A. W. Budge (ed. and tr.), *The Histories of Rabbān Hōrmīzd the Persian and Rabbān Bar 'Idtā*, London 1902, pp. 115, 159 = 166, 240.

93. From Yoktan issued the thirteen nations speaking Syriac whose dwelling stretched from Sepharvaim to Mesha, i.e. the borders of Canaan to Mesene, with Elam as their limit (thus Isho'dad, van den Eynde, *Commentaire, I. Genèse*, pp. 131f = 143; cf. Solomon of Baṣra, *The Book of the Bee*, ed. and tr. E. A W. Budge, Oxford 1886, chapter xxii, pp. 36 = 36).

94. Sachau, *Syrische Rectsbücher*, vol. iii, p. vii.

95. Bedjan, *Acta Martyrum*, vol. iv, pp. 184ff.

96. Cf. Bidez and Cumont, *Les mages hellénisés*, vol. i, pp. 42ff.

97. Nimrod teaches Ardashīr astrology and Zoroastrian sexual malpractices in E. A. W. Budge (tr.), *The Book of the Cave of Treasures*, London 1927, pp. 143f.

98. A. Rücker, 'Zwei nestorianische Hymnen über die Magier', *Oriens Christianus* 1923; cf. U. Monneret de Villard, *Le Leggende orientali sui Magi evangelici*, Rome 1952.

99. In addition to the nobles cited above (p. 190, n. 71), note Razshah, a rich and respected man in Adiabene who converted together with his dependents (Mšiḥa-Zkha in Mingana, *Sources syriaques*, pp. 14ff = 90ff); the nobles of Arbela who wanted Sabrisho' as their metropolitan (A. Scher, 'Histoire du couvent de Sabrišo'', *Revue de l'Orient chrétien* 1906, p. 187); the lord of Beth Gurbak, an upright believer and nobleman (Budge, *Histories*, pp. 136 = 201); the exceedingly rich father of Teris-Isho' who offered Bar 'Idta an expensive field (*ibid.*, pp. 143 = 214); the nobles of Bet Garmai and Bet Nuhadra who visited Mar Isho'-Sabran in prison (Isho'yahb of Adiabene, *Histoire de Jésus-Sabran*, ed. with French summary by J.-B. Chabot, Paris 1897, p. 498); Isho'yahb of Adiabene, himself the son of a nobleman (Thomas of Marga, *The Book of Governors*, ed. and tr. E. A. W. Budge, London 1893, pp. 194 = 378); Thomas of Marga, who wrote his *Book of Governors* at the request of a governor of Adiabene who was probably the son of the magnate Sabrisho' who visited the monastery of the ascetic Sabrisho' (Scher, 'Histoire du couvent de Sabrišo'', p. 194n); and Mar Benjamin of Beth Nuhadra, the son of illustrious and famous parents, dignitaries at the Persian court, who later converted to Christianity (V. Scheil, 'La vie de Mar Benjamin', *Revue de l'Orient chrétien* 1897, p. 247).

100. Saba was of the house of Mihran (Bedjan, *Acta Martyrum*, vol. ii, p. 636 = Hoffmann, *Auszüge*, p. 68, with the correct reading); Mar Yuḥannan was of royal blood (Isho'denaḥ, *Livre de la chasteté*, ed. and tr. J.-B. Chabot, Paris 1896, pp. 4 = 230); similarly Mar Grigor (Hoffmann, *Auszüge*, p. 78); Golindukht and her relative belonged either to the Persian nobility or to the priestly class (P. Peeters, 'Sainte Golindouch, martyre perse', *Analecta Bollandiana* 1944, pp. 82, 105; P. Devos, 'Sainte Šīrīn, martyre sous Khosrau I^{er} Anōšarvān', *ibid.* 1946, pp. 94f).

101 The ideal is embodied in Joseph and Teqla from Khūzistān, who were exceedingly well-provided with the riches of this world which pass away and shall be dissolved, so that men-servants and maid-servants ministered unto them while they performed the service of angels with fasting and prayer (Budge, *Histories*, pp. 9 = 13f).

102. Whence the renunciation and/or martyrdom of Mar Kardag (see above, p. 190, n. 71), Yuḥannan from Ḥazza who was an archer in the king's service (Scher, 'Histoire du couvent de Sabrišo', pp. 189f), Ṭaṭaq who was *domesticus* to the king (Bedjan, *Acta Martyrum*, vol. iv, pp. 181ff), Grigor who was governor of the northern frontier (Hoffmann, *Auszüge*, pp. 78f), and others.

103. Whence the Christian secretary of the general of the royal cavalry (Isho'-yahb, *Histoire de Jésus-Sabran*, p. 495), the Christian chief of the prison into which Isho'-sabran was thrown (*ibid.*, p. 496), and the many laymen prominent inside and outside the Sasanid court in J. M. Fiey, 'Les laïcs dans l'histoire de l'Eglise syrienne orientale', *Proche-Orient chrétien* 1964.

104. Fiey, *Assyrie chrétienne*, vol. iii, p. 23; cf. 'Yazdin the faithful', 'Yazdin the good', 'Yazdin the virtuous', 'Yazdin the publican' (*ibid.*, p. 25).

105. As emerges partly from their concerted attempt to convert the Persian nobility, and partly from their reverent attitude to the Persian king; not only were they concerned to demonstrate the legality of their actions (cf. P. Devos, 'Abgar, hagiographe perse méconnu', *Analecta Bollandiana* 1965, p. 323), but they also equipped the tolerant Yazdegerd with all the attributes of a Constantine: like Constantine, Yazdegerd was victorious (Chabot, *Synodicon Orientale*, pp. 20 = 258), held his kingship by the grace of God, made peace to reign in the universe (*ibid.*, pp. 37 = 276), was a Christian (*sic*) and blessed among kings (*Chronica Minora*, pp. 137 = 107). No such warmth was ever displayed vis-à-vis the Muslim caliphs, tolerant or otherwise.

106. W. F. Macomber, 'The Theological Synthesis of Cyrus of Edessa', *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 1964.

107. A. Vööbus, *History of the School of Nisibis* (= CSCO, Subsidia, vol. xxvi), Louvain 1965, pp. 257f; cf. *id.*, 'Theological Reflexions on Human Nature in Ancient Syriac Traditions', in P. J. Hefner (ed.), *The Scope of Grace: Essays on Nature and Grace in Honor of Joseph Sittler*, Philadelphia 1964.

108. F. Heiler, *Die Ostkirchen*, Munich and Basel 1971, p. 317.

109. A. Baumstark, 'Die nestorianische Schriften "de causis festorum"', *Oriens Christianus* 1901, p. 340.

110. Cf. P. Krüger, 'Zum theologischen Menschenbild des Babai d. Gr.', *Oriens Christianus* 1960; *id.*, 'Das Problem des Pelagianismus bei Babai dem Grossen', *ibid.* 1962; *id.*, 'Das Geheimnis der Taufe in den Werken Babais d. Gr.', *ibid.* 1963; cf. also Isho'dad's confidence that by natural law men can distinguish between good and evil (van den Eynde, *Commentaire, I. Genèse*, pp. 65f = 71).

111. Vööbus, *School of Nisibis*.

112. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*², s.v. 'Gondēshāpūr'.

113. Vööbus, *School of Nisibis*, pp. 204–7, 290, 299, 311; Scher, 'Histoire du couvent de Sabrišo', p. 184; Macomber, 'Theological Synthesis', p. 7.

114. Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur*, pp. 11f.

115. Henana served his pupils delicacies from the scriptures salted with the elegant words of the philosophers (Barḥadbeshabba, *La cause de la fondation des écoles*, ed. and tr. A. Scher, in *Patrologia Orientalis*, vol. iv, p. 392); Dadisho' Qaṭraya did not see why he should quote scripture or patristic literature on the excellence of the solitary life when the philosophers had said and practised it already (A. Mingana (ed. and tr.), 'Treatise on Solitude and Prayer by Dādishō' Kaṭrāya', in his *Woodbrooke Studies*, vol. vii, Cambridge 1934, f. 28b = p. 111); the glory of Ninive consisted in having produced philosophers (Budge, *Histories*, pp. 159 = 240); Isho'dad is of the opinion that the scribes of Israel were instructed in the secrets of geometry, arithmetic, rhetoric and philosophy (van den Eynde, *Commentaire, I. Genèse*, pp. 6 = 7); and Thomas of Marga thinks that Izla was to the Nestorians what Athens had been to the Greeks (*Book of Governors*, pp. 23 = 42).

116. The manual *Instituta regularia divinae legis* (in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, Paris 1844–91, vol. lxviii) was composed by Paul the Persian, a graduate of Nisibis, and translated, presumably via Greek, into Latin by a *quaestor sacri palati* in Constantinople (A. Vööbus, 'Abraham De-Bēt Rabban and his Rôle in the Hermeneutic Traditions of the School of Nisibis', *The Harvard Theological Review* 1965, pp. 211f).

117. A. Vööbus, 'The Origins of Monasticism in Mesopotamia', *Church History* 1951; cf. above, p. 63.

118. A. Rücker, 'Eine Anweisung für geistliche Übungen nestorianischer Mönche des 7. Jahrhunderts', *Oriens Christianus* 1934, p. 194.

119. Chabot, *Synodicon Orientale*, pp. 56ff = 303ff.

120. B. Spuler, *Die morgenländischen Kirchen*, Leyden 1964, p. 129.

121. Cf. A. J. Wensinck (tr.), *Mystic Treatises by Isaac of Ninive*, Amsterdam 1923, pp. xiiff.

122. Thus Martyrius (Sahdona), *Oeuvres spirituelles*, vols. i–iii, ed. and tr. A. de Halleux (= CSCO, Scriptores Syri, vols. lxxxvif, xcf, cxf), Louvain 1960–5, and the mystic treatises published by Mingana in his *Woodbrooke Studies*, vol. vii. Note how nazirites and theologians in Iraq come to share a common mystic orientation, if not a similar degree of orthodoxy, with the probably Messalian *Liber graduum* (ed. and tr. M. Kmosko, in R. Graffin (ed.), *Patrologia Syriaca*, Paris 1894–1926, vol. iii) on the one hand, and Babai's *Liber de unione* on the other.

123. Theodoretus of Cyrrhus, *Thérapeutique des maladies helléniques*, ed. and tr. P. Canivet, Paris 1958, x:53. Theodoretus died *c.* A.D. 460.

124. The menace of Rome provoked the Egyptianising policy of Euergetes II in Egypt and the Hellenising policy of Antiochus Epiphanes in Syria; where Euergetes appointed the native Paos duke of the Thebaid, Epiphanes installed himself in Jewish and Samaritan temples.

125. J. Hastings (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Edinburgh 1908–26, *s.nn.* 'Philo Byblius', 'Sanchuniathon'.

126. E. Rohde, *Der griechische Roman*[2], Leipzig 1910, pp. 453ff. His priestly status is implied in his claim to descend from Helios.

127. Despite Uranius' descent from the local god, his bid was for the status of Augustus Imperator (R. MacMullen, *Enemies of the Roman Order*, Cambridge, Mass. 1967, p. 224).

128. Cf. her sponsorship of Apollonius of Tyana.

129. A Syrian from Apamea, he led the Sicilian slave revolt of 136 B.C., styling himself 'Antiochus, king of the Syrians' (J. Vogt, *Struktur der antiken Sklavenkriege*, Mainz 1957, pp. 18f).

130. Theodoretus, *Thérapeutique*, ii : 44–6.

131. J. B. Segal, *Edessa, the Blessed City*, Oxford 1970, pp. 9ff.

132. Though of course the Hurrians may be perpetuated in the name Orhay/Osrhoene; but it is typical of the Syrian predicament that even in the sixteenth century B.C. the Hurrians should have had an Aryan aristocracy.

133. Western sources commonly identity them as Arabs (Pauly-Wissowa, *Realencyclopädie*, art. 'Edessa'); Syriac sources commonly as Parthian (see for example Cureton, *Ancient Syriac Documents*, pp. 41, 94 = 41, 93). Cf. Segal, *Edessa*, pp. 31, 170.

134. It may of course be the native Phoenicia which is behind the messianic king of Baalbek (P. J. Alexander, *The Oracle of Baalbek* (= *Dumbarton Oaks Studies*, vol. x), Washington D.C. 1967, lines 205ff = p. 29), but it takes good eyes to see it. Even Edessa did not pine for the return of its Abgars.

135. As in the case of Rabbula (Overbeck, *Opera selecta*, p. 160).

136. There are many examples in Seeck, *Briefe des Libanius* (see for example *s.nn.* 'Julianus VII', 'Ulpianus I', 'Cyrillus I', 'Gaianus', 'Addaeus'; the last-named is presumably identical with the Addai who was *statelates* in Edessa in 396, see F. C. Burkitt (ed. and tr.), *Euphemia and the Goths*, London 1913, pp. 46 = 131). Cf. also the prominence of Syrian sophists in third-century Athens (F. Millar, 'P. Herennius Dexippus, the Greek World and the Third Century Invasions', *Journal of Roman Studies* 1969, pp. 16, 18).

137. E. R. Dodds, *Pagan and Christian in an Age of Anxiety*, Cambridge 1965.

138. Though of course the complaint of the Preacher that in much wisdom there is much sorrow reflects the common predicament.

139. Cf. the evidence of disillusion and scepticism adduced by Derchain in Grimal, *Hellenism and the Rise of Rome*, p. 220, and the fatalist occasionalism of the dictum that 'man is but clay and straw and God fashions him each day as he wishes' (*ibid.*, p. 234).

140. *Ibid.*, pp. 238–41.

141. See D. Chwolson, *Die Ssabier und der Ssabismus*, St Petersburg 1856, for

the texts, and J. Hjärpe, *Analyse critique des traditions arabes sur les Sabéens ḥarraniens*, Uppsala 1972, for an analysis.

142. Cf. the impressive list of gods lined up by Jacob of Sarug in his discourse on the fall of the idols (Abbé Martin, 'Discourse de Jacques de Saroug sur la chute des idols', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 1875), Tatian's plea that there should be only one law (*Oratio adversus Graecos*, in *PG*, vol. vi, col. 865), and Bardesanes' comment that the unbelievers are the prey of every fear and know nothing for certain (*Liber legum regionum*, ed. and tr. F. Nau, in *Patrologia Syriaca*, vol. i, part one, col. 543).

143. For all this compare P. L. Berger and T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality*, Harmondsworth 1971, especially pp. 110–22; P. L. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, New York 1967, especially pp. 19–28, 48–52, 126ff.

144. Cf. P. Brown, 'Sorcery, Demons and the Rise of Christianity: from Late Antiquity into the Middle Ages', in his *Religion and Society in the Age of St. Augustine*, London 1972, especially pp. 132ff.

145. Demons of disease were of course as common in Syria as elsewhere (cf. A. Adnès and P. Canivet, 'Guérisons miraculeuses et exorcismes dans l'"Histoire Philothée" de Théodoret de Cyr', *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 1967, for examples from a relatively sober author); similarly the demons of passion who attack the concupiscent part of the soul, conjuring up friends, relatives, women and similarly tempting sights, to use Evagrius' phraseology (A. Guillaumont, 'Un philosophe au désert: Evagre le pontique', *ibid.* 1972, pp. 36–42); it is as such that they tempt Mar Benjamin (Scheil, 'La vie de Mar Benjamin', pp. 250f).

146. For the Messalian concept of the indwelling demon, see Vööbus, *History of Asceticism*, vol, ii, pp. 135ff. Philosophy and mystery religion failed to liberate Tatian from demonic enslavement to many lords and a myriad of tyrants, similarly Rabbula, but both were manumitted on conversion to Christianity (*ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 32f; Overbeck, *Opera Selecta*, p. 163). Apart from the usual miracles, Aaron of Sarug was particularly noted for his continued fight against a demon which persisted in following him from place to place (F. Nau (ed. and tr.), *Les légendes syriaques d'Aaron de Saroug*, in *Patrologia Orientalis*, vol. v, pp. 697ff). Note also the reassuringly recognisable character of the demons who tempt St Anthony with Evagrian passions and Mar Kardag with Sasanid power; Rabbula's snakes and reptiles, by contrast, would have appealed to a Hieronymus Bosch.

147. A. Vööbus, *History of Asceticism*, vol. i, pp. 97ff; *id.*, 'The Institution of the Benai Qeiama and Benat Qeiama in the Ancient Syrian Church', *Church History* 1961, p. 21.

148. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

149. The *Suryane* of Nestorian Iraq quite frequently speak of themselves and their language as Aramean.

150. Cf. the double cultural alienation illustrated in the account of the Edessene celebration of the Greek spring festival: the Edessenes deride their ancestors for their ignorance of Greek sophistication, and the clergy upbraid the Edessenes for their attachment to Greek paganism (Joshua the Stylite, *Chronicle*, ed. and tr. W.

Wright, Cambridge 1882, pp. 25f = 20f).

151. Cf. T. Nöldeke, 'Die Namen der aramäischen Nation und Sprache', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 1871, p. 116.

152. B. Dodge (tr.), *The Fihrist of al-Nadîm*, New York 1970, vol. ii, p. 763; cf. Ibn Waḥshiyya's hope of a Chaldean restoration (Chwolson, *Überreste*, p. 49).

153. T. Nöldeke, 'Assyrios, Syrios, Syros', *Hermes* 1871.

154. The form appears in the chronicle of Jacob of Edessa (*Chronica Minora*, pp. 281 = 211).

155. Instead of founding a Syrian nation, Alexander prophecies the end of the world (Jacob of Sarug, 'Discourse on Alexander, the believing king', in E. A. W. Budge, *The History of Alexander the Great*, Cambridge 1889, pp. 192ff).

156. Theodoretus, *Thérapeutique*, ii : 114, quoting Numenius.

157. Cf. F. E. Cranz, 'Kingdom and Polity in Eusebius of Caesarea', *The Harvard Theological Review* 1952, p. 52.

158. Ibn Waḥshiyya quoted in T. Fahd, 'L'Agriculture Nabatéenne : son apport à l'histoire économique de la Mésopotamie avant l'Islam', unpublished paper presented to the Conference on the Social and Economic History of the Middle East held at Princeton, June 1974, p. 18.

159. Contrast the role of the Twelve Tables in defining the Roman nation with that of the 'Laws of Constantine and Theodosius' in obliterating Syria.

160. J. Perret, *Les origines de la légende troyenne de Rome*, Paris 1942.

161. As did Theophilus of Edessa for Mahdī (Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur*, p. 341).

162. The Greeks don't know everything, witness the Indians, and the Babylonians invented astronomy; now the Syrians are Babylonians . . . (F. Nau, 'La cosmographie au VII^{e} siècle chez les syriens', *Revue de l'Orient chrétien* 1910, pp. 249f); whence Severus' treatise on the astrolable.

163. Tatian speaks of himself as an Assyrian (*Oratio*, col. 888) who adopted the barbarian doctrine of Christ and rejected Greek learning (col. 868). He no doubt came from Syria, not Adiabene, and this for a number of reasons. In the first place, Syrians often appear as Assyrians in contemporary Graeco-Roman writings (cf. the examples listed by Nöldeke, 'Assyrios, Syrios, Syros', pp. 462ff), and there is no lack of authors who conversely describe Tatian as Syrian (cf. Vööbus, *History of Asceticism*, vol. i, p. 32n). In the second place, 'Assyrian' was commonly abusive, cf. Elagabalus' nickname; and this agrees with Tatian's defiant use of the abusive 'barbarian'. In the third place, it is hard to see how Adiabene, which had only briefly been occupied by Rome and had at this stage no solid Hellenistic culture, could have produced a man of such solid Greek education as Tatian, who made a living of it from Syria to Rome.

164. Which would go some way to explain Theodoretus' concern to attack the Hellenes at this rather belated stage.

165. 'The philosophers and the orators have fallen into oblivion, the masses

don't even know the names of the emperors and the generals, but everyone knows the names of the martyrs better than those of their most intimate friends' (Theodoretus, *Thérapeutique*, viii:67).

166. Cf. Theodoretus' pathetic attempt to have the civilised barbarians cash in on the Jewish discovery of truth: the Hebrews, the Phoenicians, the Egyptians and the Babylonians had all found truth before the Greeks, the Phoenicians because they were neighbours of the Hebrews, the Egyptians because of the Hebrew bondage there, the Babylonians because of the Hebrew exile there (*Thérapeutique*, i:43ff). The Syrians were too close to the Judaic scene to claim Israelite descent in the manner of the Ethiopians, or to make themselves out to be the lost tribes of Israel in the manner of the probably indigenous Jews of Adiabene (Marquart, *Streifzüge*, p. 288), or even to present the Jews as an Aramean sub-tribe in order to claim Jesus as a Syrian (for a stray reference to Jesus as a Syrian by Dionysius Bar Ṣalibi, see his 'Treatise against the Melchites', ed. and tr. Mingana in his *Woodbrooke Studies*, vol. i, Cambridge 1927, pp. 88 = 57).

167. Theodoretus, *Thérapeutique*, v:55.

168. *Ibid.*, v:70f.

169. *Ibid.*, i:19–22.

170. Thus Theodoretus. His catalogue of barbarian inventions is more or less identical with Tatian's, but whereas Tatian concluded that Greek culture was not worth having, Theodoretus' conclusion is that one might as well have it; compare their treatments of Plato, who is rejected with short shrift by Tatian, but is an Attic-speaking Moses to Theodoretus.

171. Thus already Meleager of Gadara in the second century B.C.: 'If I am a Syrian, what wonder? Stranger, we dwell in one country, the world; one Chaos gave birth to all mortals'; but though genealogy is irrelevant and all men are of Chaos, he still wanted Homer to be a Syrian and the Achaeans a Syrian tribe (M. Hadas, *Hellenistic Culture: Fusion and Diffusion*, New York 1959, pp. 83, 111).

172. Vööbus, *History of Asceticism*, vol. ii, pp. 19–31 (Syria), 32f (North Africa).

173. Brown, 'Christianity and Local Culture in Late Roman Africa', pp. 88f.

174. The founder of Syrian asceticism was Tatian, condemned in the west and revered in the east, who derived his ideas from the Old Testament naziriteship (Vööbus, *History of Asceticism*, vol. i, pp. 35ff); the perfect nazirite abstains from all food except lentils, leaves of trees, bread, water and salt, and spends his life in solitary prayer and endless tears (John of Ephesus, *Lives of the Eastern Saints*, ed. and tr. E. W. Brooks, in *Patrologia Orientalis*, vols. xvii–xix, part one, pp. 36–40). *Nazira*, *nazirutha* are common terms for ascetic, asceticism in Syriac.

175. Vööbus, 'The Institution of the Benai Qeiama', p. 19.

176. *Ibid.*, pp. 23ff; but note that the 'Sons of the Covenant' are still conceived as the core of the church in the biography of the fifth-century Rabbula

(G. G. Blum, *Rabbula von Edessa: der Christ, der Bischof, der Theologe* (= CSCO, Subsidia, vol. xxxiv), Louvain 1969, pp. 56f); contrast the development in Assyria, where by 485 the 'Sons of the Covenant' had been permitted to marry and eat meat, having acquired the position of lay clerics between laymen and cenobites (Rücker, 'Eine Anweisung für geistliche Übungen nestorianischer Mönche des 7. Jahrhunderts', p. 194); cf. also Isho'dad's unsympathetic treatment of the nazirite-ship (van den Eynde, *Commentaire, II. Exode-Deutéronomie*, pp. 89 = 102).

177. Vööbus, *History of Asceticism*, vol. ii, pp. 123ff.

178. For the rise of cenobitism, see Vööbus, *History of Asceticism*, vol. ii, pp. 61–123; for the solitary ideal, *ibid.*, pp. 304–6. Note also Isaac of Antioch's horror at the new developments: Israel in the desert did not sow, reap or plant trees (*ibid.*, p. 148).

179. Contrast Assyria, where – allowing for some overlap between Syrian and Assyrian Mesopotamia – the fact that Christian ascetics have a knack for expelling demons carries no implication that all Christians should pursue medical careers.

180. Cf. Vööbus, *History of Asceticism*, vol. ii, pp. 292–315.

181. *Ibid.*, pp. 294–300.

182. Nöldeke has a good briefing for such a descent into hell in his *Sketches from Eastern History*, London and Edinburgh 1892, chapter 7. Cf. also the linking of cosmopolitanism and renunciation in Cynicism: if one is a citizen of nowhere, it is a matter of taste whether one chooses to inhabit a Syrian pillar or an Athenian tub.

183. A. Vööbus, *Syriac and Arabic Documents Regarding Legislation Relative to Syrian Asceticism*, Stockholm 1960, no. 7, p. 28; no. 20, p. 31; nos. 2f, p. 95; *id.*, *History of Asceticism*, vol. i, p. 276; cf. *ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 300, 323, 326, for other evidence of rivalry.

184. W. Hage, *Die syrisch-jacobitische Kirche in frühislamischer Zeit*, Wiesbaden 1966, pp. 12, 34.

185. Cf. the emperor who thinks Philoxenus worthy of the episcopate on the grounds that he is a great exegete, sage and philosopher and a great worker of miracles (Eli of Qartamin, *Mēmrā sur S. Mār Philoxène de Mabbog*, ed. and tr. A. de Halleux (= CSCO, Scriptores Syri, vols. cf), Louvain 1963, lines 137–46 = p. 6); and the posthumous consecration of Ephraim by his biographer (Bedjan, *Acta Martyrum*, vol. iii, p. 648). Both the rivalry and its resolution may be compared to that which obtains between acquired and ascribed *baraka* in Muslim Morocco (cf. the saint al-Yūsī who secures official consecration from the 'Alid sultan, C. Geertz, *Islam Observed*, Chicago 1971, pp. 34f); but whereas Islam gave the Moroccans Arab genealogy to play the ascriptive game with, Christianity gave the Syrians only the Hellenised church.

186. R. Devréesse, *Le Patriarchat d'Antioche depuis la paix de l'Eglise jusqu'à la conquête arabe*, Paris 1945, pp. 45ff.

187. Hage, *Die syrisch-jacobitische Kirche*, p. 36.

188. Hardy, *Christian Egypt*, pp. 33, 140; cf. also the barbarian rather than

specifically Syrian orientation of the travels of Jacob Baradaeus (Frend, *Monophysite Movement*, p. 287).

189. The latter in the shape of the Christian Arabs whose king Ḥārith b. Jabala was to be instrumental in the restoration, not of Nestorianism, but of Monophysitism (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 284f, 326).

190. *Ibid.*, pp. 16ff.

191. *Ibid.*, pp. 283ff.

192. Alexander, *The Oracle of Baalbek*, lines 205ff = p. 29.

193. Kaegi has squeezed the sources for what there is of Syrian interest in the fate of the Roman Empire (W. E. Kaegi, *Byzantium and the Decline of Rome*, Princeton 1968, pp. 146ff); squeezing them for anti-imperial sentiments would presumably yield a similarly meagre harvest.

194. Urbanus was assessor to the Comes Orientis in 359f; his son distributed his inheritance among the poor to become a monk (Seeck, *Briefe des Libanius*, *s.n.*).

195. They were landowners in Antioch, Syrians by descent, Christians by faith, and Greeks by culture and conciliar membership; on their death Theodoretus distributed his inheritance among the poor to become a monk (see Canivet's introduction to Theodoretus, *Thérapeutique*, vol. i, pp. 10ff).

196. Tatian, *Oratio*, col. 829.

197. Thus Sarjūn b. Manṣūr al-Rūmī, whom the Arabs inherited, was typically a Melkite.

198. Thus Rabbula, a wealthy man in provincial office (Overbeck, *Opera Selecta*, p. 166); Thomas of Amida, a descendant of a patrician, who left his estates and riches to live in a pit (John of Ephesus, *Lives of the Eastern Saints*, part one, p. 191); Ḥarfaṭ of Hanzīṭ, of a great and wealthy family, who left his possessions to his brother to withdraw into a monastery – the brother who kept this wealth being typically a deceitful man who meddled in the affairs of the *praetoriani* in the governor's service (*ibid.*, pp. 158ff); the blessed Caesaria, a patrician of great royal race who subjected herself to humiliation and reduced herself to lowly station (*ibid.*, part three, pp. 185ff); and many others.

199. Thanks to their prolonged independence, the Edessenes contrived to save their past by having Abgar Ukkama convert to Christianity (see Segal, *Edessa*, pp. 62ff, for the legend and its *Vorlage* in Adiabene). Relations between the Edessenes and their magnates accordingly display a certain warmth, as on the occasion of the Robber Council of Ephesus against which the city was united (Vööbus, *School of Nisibis*, p. 29), or during the famine of 500f when governors, magnates and soldiers were united in their relief work (Joshua the Stylite, *Chronicle*, pp. 38 = 32). For the Rospaye, Tel-Mahraye and other Edessene Apions who combined wealth, power and a Monophysite creed, see Segal, *Edessa*, pp. 126, 146; here as elsewhere, of course, nobles can be trusted to misbehave if left outside episcopal control (Joshua the Stylite, *Chronicle*, pp. 81, 84f = 68, 71; Overbeck, *Opera Selecta*, pp. 182, 187).

200. Note the contrast between the ways in which the Egyptian merchant and

Rabbula go about their quests for spiritual pearls (Palladius, *Paradise*, vol. i, pp. 361f; Overbeck, *Opera Selecta*, pp. 165f).

201. As said of Peter and Photius, John of Ephesus, *Lives of the Eastern Saints*, part three, p. 197.

202. As did Theophilus and Mary, only children of wealthy Antiochene families, who left the world to live a holy life disguised as disreputable mimes (*ibid.*, pp. 164–79 = Nöldeke, *Sketches from Eastern History*, pp. 233 ff).

203. The school of Nisibis was after all an import from Edessa.

204. Vööbus, *History of Asceticism*, vol. ii, pp. 388ff.

205. For an impressive sample of flotsam from the Greek *Jāhiliyya*, see S. Brock (ed. and tr.), *The Syriac Version of the Pseudo-Nonnos Mythological Scholia*, Cambridge 1971.

206. Cf. F. Nau, 'L'araméen chrétien (syriaque). Les traductions faites du grec en syriaque du VII^{e} siècle', *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 1929, pp. 256ff.

207. A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire, 284–602*, Oxford 1964, vol. ii, p. 1007; cf. Rabbula, who set up schools to teach pagan children of princes and the wealthy the truth in Syriac (E. de Stoop (ed. and tr.), *Vie d'Alexandre l'Acémète*, in *Patrologia Orientalis*, vol. vi, pp. 673f).

208. Cf. E. Beck (ed. and tr.), *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Hymnen de fide* (= CSCO, Scriptores Syri, vols. lxxiiif), Louvain 1955, Hymnus 2:24: 'happy is he who has not tasted the poisonous wisdom of the Greeks'.

209. Ephraem's eloquence cured the Edessenes of their captivation with the 'Greek wisdom' of Harmonius, the son of Bardesanes 'the Aramean' (Bedjan, *Acta Martyrum*, vol. iii, pp. 652f; Ephraem, *Prose Refutations*, ed. C. W. Mitchell, London, 1919–21, vol. ii, pp. 8, 225). Ephraem likewise explained Arianism as the result of the impermissable attempt of the 'Greek spirit' to penetrate the nature of God (E. Beck, *Ephraem's Reden über den Glauben* (= Studia Anselmiana, fasc. xxxiii), Rome 1953, pp. 111ff; *id.*, *Die Theologie des Hl. Ephraem*, pp. 62ff).

210. Bar Hebraeus, *Chronicon Ecclesiasticum*, ed. and tr. J. B. Abbeloos and T. J. Lamy, Louvain 1872–7, vol. i, cols. 291 = 292. As a result Jacob left the monastery. Contrast the failure of Isho'yahb to set up a school in the monastery of Beth 'Awe because the monks wanted peace and quiet, as a result of which the school was set up elsewhere (Fiey, 'Išō'yaw le Grand', *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 1969, p. 323).

211. On the two in general, see Blum, *Rabbula von Edessa*, and A. de Halleux, *Philoxène de Mabbog: sa vie, ses écrits, sa théologie*, Louvain 1963.

212. Philoxenus, *Discourses*, ed. and tr. E. A. W. Budge, London 1894, pp. 260 = 250.

213. *Ibid.*, pp. 244ff = 234ff.

214. *Ibid.*, pp. 256ff, 308f = 246ff, 295.

215. *Ibid.*, pp. 52 = 49.

216. *Ibid.*, pp. 36 = 33.

217. *Ibid.*, pp. 288ff = 275ff; cf. also his letter to the monks who are engaged in cultivating the virtues leading to perfection, a circumstance which justifies his daring in speaking to them of the 'inaccessible wisdom' (*Lettre aux moines de Senoun*, ed. and tr. A. de Halleux (= CSCO, Scriptores Syri, vols. xcviiif), Louvain 1963, pp. 71 = 58).

218. Blum, *Rabbula von Edessa*, pp. 133ff.

219. Overbeck, *Opera Selecta*, p. 239.

220. *Ibid.*, p. 241.

221. *Loc. cit.*

222. A point very forcefully stated in the account of his conversion (Overbeck, *Opera Selecta*, pp. 162–4); where Theodoretus uses Socrates to establish that human reason demonstrates our ignorance (*Thérapeutique*, i:83f), Rabbula's mentors invoke his persecution by demons to make the same point; and where Awida refuses to accept the principle of *credo ut intelligam* (Bardesanes, *Liber legum regionum*, col. 541), Rabbula accepts that of *credo ut liberer.*

223. Philoxenus, *Discourses*, pp. 309 = 296.

224. C. Moss, 'Isaac of Antioch. Homily on the Royal City', *Zeitschrift für Semitistik* 1929 and 1932, pp. 305f = 70f; cf. also I. Hausherr, 'Les grands courants de la spiritualité orientale', *Orientalia Christiana Periodica* 1935, pp. 119–21. Nestorian Iraq, which in so many respects began as a province of Syria, has similar echoes, cf. the division of Narsai's loyalties between Theodore of Mopsuestia and Ephraem's 'inscrutable God' (T. Jansma, 'Narsai and Ephraem. Some Observations on Narsai's Homilies on Creation and Ephraem's Hymns on Faith', *Parole de l'Orient* 1970); but the inscrutability with which the Nestorian God was left soon became pretty minimal.

225. Overbeck, *Opera Selecta*, p. 239.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 8

1. Hagarism is a faith, but Vandalism is merely a behavioural syndrome.

2. 'This heavenly city, then, while it sojourns on earth, calls citizens out of all nations ... not scrupling about diversities in the manners, laws and institutions whereby earthly peace is secured and maintained ... It therefore is so far from rescinding and abolishing these diversities, that it even preserves and adopts them, so long as no hindrance to the worship of the one supreme and true God is thus introduced' (Augustine, *City of God*, xix:17 as cited in Avis, 'Moses and the Magistrate: a Study in the Rise of Protestant Legalism', p. 150). For an equally incisive presentation of the point in the more hostile perspective of a Muslim work, see Stern, ''Abd Al-Jabbār's Account of how Christ's Religion was Falsified by the Adoption of Roman Customs'.

3. See J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, 'Gothia and Romania', in his *The Long-Haired Kings and other studies in Frankish history*, London 1962, p. 25.

4. E. A. Thompson, *The Visigoths in the Time of Ulfila*, Oxford 1966.

5. *Ibid.*, p. xviii.

6. E. A. Thompson, *The Goths in Spain*, Oxford 1969, pp. 40n, 84.

7. For the lack of any wish to make converts among the native population of Visigothic Spain, and the complementary attempt of Leovigild to convert the *Germanic* Sueves of Galicia, see *ibid.*, pp. 106f; compare the behaviour of the Saracen conquerors on Mt Sinai (see above, p. 120).

8. *Ibid.*, p. 57.

9. Contrast the polyglot history of the Christian (or Buddhist) scriptures with the intransigent untranslatability of the Koran.

10. In the Javanese case it is indicative of the terms of trade that those who take the demands of their religion seriously are construed by their fellow-countrymen as foreigners (C. Geertz, *The Religion of Java*, Glencoe, Ill. 1960, p. 123); in the West African case something of the relationship between Islam and the pagan polities of the area is caught in the designation of the Muslims as 'the wives of the chief' (N. Levtzion, *Muslims and Chiefs in West Africa*, Oxford 1968, pp. 58, 132).

11. Wensinck, *Concordance, s.v. hadama.*

12. M. Molé, 'Les Kubrawiya entre sunnisme et shiisme aux huitième et neuvième siècles de l'Hégire', *Revue des études islamiques* 1961, pp. 78–91; D. Ayalon, 'The great Yāsa of Chingiz Khān. A reexamination (B)', *Studia Islamica* 1971, pp. 177–80; *Encyclopaedia of Islam*², art. 'Čingizids' (the descendants of the pagan Chingiz Khān here constitute an *ahl al-bayt* whose function in generating political legitimacy is comparable to that of the family of the Prophet).

13. Cf. the perceptive lament of Ziya Gökalp (N. Berkes (tr.), *Turkish Nationalism and Western Civilisation: Selected Essays of Ziya Gökalp*, London 1959, p. 227).

14. For all their *Jāhilī* past (cf. the passage from Diodorus Siculus cited above, p. 157, n. 38), the Nabateans had been quick enough to proclaim their Philhellenism on conquering Damascus (Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People*, p. 578).

15. The aristocratic Hungarian 'nation' prior to the advent of modern nationalism is in its own self-consciousness quite simply constituted by descent from the pagan and barbarian Magyar invaders; the obverse to this very powerful sense of ethnicity being the complete submission of the Hungarians to European culture. The orthodox Slavs are politically less impressive, but contrived a certain sub-cultural autonomy by combining an early use of the vernacular as a literary language with an obscurantist use of Hesychasm against the Hellenic component of their Byzantine tradition. And if the descendants of the Prophet are a poor political substitute for the Hungarian aristocracy, Hesychasm is a very inferior cultural substitute for Ḥanbalism.

16. One rather curious exception is worth noting here: the keys of the *Doctrina* are, so to speak, Christianised rather than Hagarised (see above, p. 4). Compare the

seventh-century 'Treatise on the Shortest Path that brings us near to God' of Joseph Ḥazzaya, ed. and tr. Mingana, in his *Woodbrooke Studies*, vol. vii, f. 87b = p. 181.

17. Thus the sublimation of Abrahamic genealogy into metaphor by the Jewish Hellenist Paul of Tarsus marks the beginning of Christianity as we know it (Gal. 4:21ff); whereas the similar attempt by the Egyptian Hellenist Ṭaha Ḥusayn nineteen centuries later threatened the end of Islam as we know it (N. Safran, *Egypt in Search of Political Community*, Cambridge Mass. 1961, p. 155).

18. Note that it is precisely these features that are fundamental to the Judaeo-Christian refusal to follow Pauline Christianity in its acceptance of Hellenism. For the Jewish *bion amikton*, see E. R. Goodenough, *Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period* vol. i, New York 1953, p. 37.

19. For the continuing meaning of the desert for Judaism, see above, p. 8; and cf. the neo-tribalism of the Dead Sea sectarians (Y. Yadin (ed. and tr.), *The Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness*, Oxford 1962, especially p. 38).

20. P. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: a biography*, London 1967, pp. 425f. The whole story of the moulding of religion to philosophical contours in the life of one of the greatest Christian saints is one which could hardly be transposed into Islamic terms outside Ismā'īlism (one reason why the Ismā'īlīs recruited some remarkable intellectual talent). It is hard to imagine the young Augustine, who winced at the painful literalness of the word of the Hebraic God until delivered by the elevated Hellenising allegories of Ambrose, could have taken gracefully to a science of rhetoric founded on the axiomatic stylistic perfection of the Koran, or to a 'theology' which accepted the truths of this scripture *bilā kayf*.

21. G. Makdisi, 'Ash'arī and the Ash'arites in Islamic religious History', *Studia Islamica* 1963, p. 31.

22. The Tanguts, whose conquest was restricted to an outlying part of China, produced a national culture by mimicking the civilisation of the Chinese (E. I. Kychanov, *Ocherk istorii tangutskogo gosudarstva*, Moscow 1968, pp. 259ff); the Manchus maintained a national identity by mimicking the barbarism of the Mongols (D. M. Farquhar, 'The Origins of the Manchus' Mongolian policy', in J. K. Fairbank (ed.), *The Chinese World Order*, Cambridge Mass. 1968). But in both cases the substantive capitulation to the shape of Chinese culture is complete. (Contrast the sense which Islam might have made of the *hijra* into the desert with which the history of the independent Tangut state begins, Kychanov, *Ocherk*, pp. 25f.)

23. Even missionary Christianity produced no literatures in Iberian or Berber; a Basque literature appeared only in the sixteenth century, and Berber literature such as it is has been the work of heretical Islam.

24. It was not of course without predecessors in the area; but the hieratic Cuneiform culture of Akkad was too cumbrous, and the international use of a profane Aramaic too utilitarian, to generate anything very similar to Hellenism as an elite culture.

25. But for the enthusiastic reception of Olympiodorus by the pagan Blemmyes in the early fifth century, see W. B. Emery, *Egypt in Nubia*, London 1965, p. 236.

26. Compare the imprudent European invention of Marxism, which has enabled the non-European victims of European civilisation to reject the world they have had thrust upon them in terms of its own truths. Marxism, like monotheism, is a message dogmatic enough to be extricated from its cultural medium and re-packaged in simplistic form for the use of those to whom the original medium remains deeply alien.

27. When Confucius was thinking of going to live among the nine wild tribes of the east, he was met with the objection: 'They are rude; how can you do such a thing?' To which the Master replied: 'If a superior man dwelt among them, what rudeness would there be?' (H. Miyakawa, 'The Confucianization of South China', in A. F. Wright (ed.), *The Confucian Persuasion*, Stanford, Col. 1960, p. 24). Rudeness is thus a tribal vice which Confucian virtue would have eliminated; Confucianism possessed no resources whatever for construing the vice itself as a virtue. So Confucius stayed at home and south China was Confucianised, whereas Muḥammad dwelt among the wild tribes of the south and the Middle East was Islamicised.

28. Cf. Joshua 2:1ff.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 9

1. Bar Penkâye's catalogue of Christian sins significantly makes no mention of conversions (Mingana, *Sources syriaques*, chapter XV). Similarly the *Sententiae* of Ḥenan-Isho', though contemporary with Jacob of Edessa (cf. below, p. 212, n. 80), include decisions on questions arising from the poll tax but not on conversions (in Sachau, *Syrische Rechtsbücher*, vol. ii).

2. Note how already the ninth-century Thomas of Marga thinks of *dihqāns* as miserable peasants who can only turn to their bishop for redress against an extortionate tax-collector (*The Book of Governors*, pp. 152 = 311f).

3. The eleventh-century Nestorian 'Abdallāh b. al-Ṭayyib had to defend science against the charge that it was not only unnecessary, Christianity being based on a miracle, but even an obstacle in the approach to God, an object of shame the acquisition of which was a fault (S. Khalil-Kussaim, 'Nécessité de la science. Texte d''Abdallah Ibn aṭ-Ṭayyib (m. 1043)', *Parole de l'Orient* 1972, pp. 249ff).

4. They certainly did not lack willingness, and that as early as the seventh century (see above, p. 11). The idea that the Arab conquests were a punishment for Christian sins does of course continue (see Muir, *The Apology of Al Kindy*, p. 13, and Solomon of Baṣra, *The Book of the Bee*, pp. 140f = 124); but by the thirteenth century we also find Christians automatically pronouncing the blessing after the names of Muḥammad, 'Alī and 'Umar [II] (Scher, *Histoire nestorienne*,

pp. 600, 618; H. Gismondi (ed. and tr.), *Maris Amri et Slibae De Patriarchis Nestorianorum*, Rome 1899, pp. 62, 65).

5. With the exception of the *dihqāns* listed by Balādhurī (*Futūḥ*, p. 265), some of whom were no doubt Christians; note their failure to create aristocratic lineages despite their early conversion. For the decline of the *dihqāns* in general, cf. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*², art. 'Dihkan'.

6. Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, II, p. 1122; W. Ahlwardt (ed.), *Anonyme arabische Chronik* (= Balādhurī, *Kitāb ansāb al-ashrāf*, vol. xi), Greifswald 1883, pp. 336f; Muḥammad b. Yazīd al-Mubarrad, *al-Kāmil fī 'l-lugha*, ed. W. Wright, Leipzig 1864–92, vol. i, p. 286.

7. Muir, *The Apology of Al Kindy*, pp. 33f.

8. Walzer, *L'Eveil de la philosophie islamique*, p. 20.

9. Y. Marquet, 'Imâmat, Résurrection et Hiérarchie selon les Ikhwân as-Safâ', *Revue des études islamiques* 1962, pp. 137f; B. Lewis, *The Origins of Ismā'ilism*, Cambridge 1940, pp. 93ff.

10. Baumstark, *Geschichte der syrischen Literatur*, pp. 280f, where it is aptly compared to *Nathan der Weise.*

11. F. Gabrieli, 'La "Zandaqa" au 1^er^ siècle abbasside', in C. Cahen *et al.*, *L'Elaboration de l'Islam*, Paris 1961.

12. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*², art. 'Dahriyya'.

13. Walzer, *L'Eveil de la philosophie islamique*, p. 19.

14. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*², *s.n.*

15. *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, *s.n.*

16. Chwolson, *Überreste*, p. 155n; A. von Gutschmidt, 'Die nabatäische Landwirtschaft und ihre Geschwister', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 1861, pp. 91f.

17. In the apt words of the seventeenth-century Veron: 'O Babylone confuse! ô qu'incertaine est la Religion prétendüe, en tous les points controversez' (R. H. Popkin, *The History of Scepticism from Erasmus to Descartes*², Assen 1964, p. 73).

18. It was a Christian who wrote *Nathan der Weise* in the European Age of Enlightenment, but the Jews who converted to Christianity in the name of European reason.

19. Yuḥannā b. al-Biṭrīq presumably converted at the hands of Ma'mūn (D. M. Dunlop, 'The Translations of al-Biṭrīq and Yaḥyā (Yuḥannā) b. al-Biṭrīq', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 1959, p. 142). Conversely, Christian philosophers were still important enough in the early eleventh century to come under the attack of Avicenna (S. Pines, 'La "Philosophie Orientale" d'Avicenne et sa polémique contre les Baghdadiens', *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Âge* 1952).

20. D. Sourdel, *Le Vizirat 'abbāside de 749 à 936*, Damascus 1959f, pp.

520–6. 'Alī b. 'Īsā was the grandson of a Christian convert from Dayr Qunnā who founded a secretarial dynasty.

21. The spate of Christian converts in the 'Abbāsid administration began with Faḍl b. Marwān, vizier in the years 833–6 (*Encyclopaedia of Islam*², *s.n.*); for 'Īsā b. Farrukhānshāh, Aḥmad b. Isrā'īl al-Anbārī, Ḥasan b. Makhlad, Sa'īd b. Makhlad and the rest, see Sourdel, *Le Vizirat 'abbāside*, pp. 291, 295, 313, 316f etc. 'Abdūn b. Makhlad, the brother of Sa'īd, remained a Christian, but his son probably converted (Fiey, *Assyrie chrétienne*, vol. iii, pp. 117f); and the same drain is reflected in the decline of the Christian communities of Persia towards the tenth and eleventh centuries (*id.*, 'L'Elam, la première des métropoles ecclésiastiques syriennes orientales', *Melto* 1969 and *Parole de l'Orient* 1970; *id.*, Médie chrétienne', *ibid.*).

22. Whence presumably the fact that there were Epicureanising Jews, Chaldeans and Muslims, but only Stoicising Christians: unlike the others, a Christian ceased to be a Christian if he indulged in scepticism.

23. As did Ibn Waḥshiyya, with a most un-Chaldean lack of scientific detachment.

24. Notably the Mandeans, who have perhaps gone furthest in the obliteration of the astrological element, and who have also renounced the Chaldean identity; cf. their history of immigration on the one hand (E. Yamauchi, *Gnostic Ethics and Mandaean Origins*, Cambridge, Mass. 1970, pp. 68ff), and their rejection of 'soothsayers and Chaldeans' on the other (M. Lidzbarski (tr.), *Ginza: Der Schatz oder das grosse Buch der Mandäer*, Göttingen 1925, pp. 37, 278, 299 etc.).

25. A conjuncture the Mandeans (contrast the Christians) cannot make sense of, as is clear from the account given in the *Ginza* of the Arab Abdallah who owes his fortune to Mars/Nerig/Nergal and tells his followers that the servants of the planets have no power (*ibid.*, pp. 233f). If the Arab conquests can be astrologically predicted (*ibid.*, p. 412), there is no point in lamenting the departure of Anosh (*ibid.*, p. 300) and the disappearance of the religion from the earth (*ibid.*, p. 54): one might as well lament the law of gravity. But if Mars is a collaborator of the evil spirit, and the Arabs can be condemned to Sheol for their deeds (*ibid.*, pp. 233f), there is no point in going on about the planets: one might as well become a Manichean.

26. *Ibid.*, pp. 30, 233.

27. Chwolson, *Die Ssabier*, vol. i, pp. 546ff.

28. Or eleventh-century, if his conversion took place in 1012 (*Encyclopaedia of Islam*², *s.n.*).

29. Note also his observation that most people have adopted the religion of the kings since the Canaanite (i.e. Arab) invasions (Chwolson, *Überreste*, p. 57).

30. As did Mā Shā' Allāh, with striking onomastic disregard for his professional convictions.

31. Thus Ṣamad al-Yahūdī, who converted at the hands of Ma'mūn (Dodge,

The Fihrist of al-Nadîm, p. 652); cf. also the case of Ibn Malkā (*Encyclopaedia of Islam*², art. 'Abū'l-Barakāt').

32. Ibn Waḥshiyya articulated his Chaldean Shu'ūbism by a reversal of Biblical history: the Jews appear as rulers of Babylon already in Mandean sources (Yamauchi, *Gnostic Ethics and Mandean Origins*, p. 68), and the ghetto having come back in the shape of the Arab tribes, Ibn Waḥshiyya proceeds to taunt the Arabs as Canaanite conquerors of Chaldea, and to present Abraham as a Canaanite immigrant to Kūthā Rabbā (Chwolson, *Überreste*, *passim*).

33. B. Vernier, *L'Iraq d'aujourd'hui*, Paris 1963, p. 92.

34. Cf. above, p. 57.

35. As a literary language primarily via philosophy, cf. G. Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, Rome 1944–53, vol. ii, pp. 109–20.

36. At more or less the same time as in Syria, though it seems to have been somewhat more resistant (cf. Brockelmann's remarks in C. Brockelmann *et al.*, *Geschichte der christlichen Litteraturen des Orients*, Leipzig 1909, p. 55).

37. F. Rosenthal, *Die Aramäistische Forschung seit Th. Nöldeke's Veröffentlichungen*, Leyden 1939, pp. 255ff.

38. J. Joseph, *The Nestorians and their Muslim Neighbours*, Princeton 1961, pp. 5ff. It was of course an advantage that the Chaldeans and Assyrians, unlike the Greeks, had no modern incarnation; but if the Melkites preferred modern Arabs to modern Greeks, the Nestorians would presumably have preferred modern Akkadians.

39. Cf. the poem cited *ibid.*, p. 152, and in general pp. 151ff.

40. Or in so far as they did not it was extremely faint: whether descended from the Gurumu of cuneiform sources or the Garamaioi of Ptolemy, the inhabitants of Bet Garma had not managed to insulate Assyria ethnically from the rest of the Fertile Crescent, and though Muslim sources distinguish between Nabaṭeans and Jarāmiqa, they are perfectly aware that the Jarāmiqa are *Suryāniyyūn* (Fiey, *Assyrie chrétienne*, vol. iii, pp. 14ff).

41. What Shu'ūbism there is is Christian, and primarily aimed at refuting the priority of Hebrew without having it go to the pagans: Syriac, not Hebrew, was the first language (Budge, *The Book of the Cave of Treasures*, p. 132); Abraham being a native of Kashkar in Babylonia, he spoke the native language of the Babylonians, who are the Arameans, who are the Syrians, and Hebrew is a fusion of Syriac and Canaanite (van den Eynde, *Commentaire, I. Genèse*, pp. 135f = 147, cf. pp. 175f = 189). There is a late apology for Syriac specifically directed against the Arabs by the thirteenth-century 'Abd-Isho': the Arabs despise other languages and in particular Syriac, but Syriac was the first language and Adam spoke it with God (P. P. Zingerle, 'Über das syrische Buch des Paradieses von Ebedjesu, Metropolit von Nisibis', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 1875, pp. 497f). In Islam, however, it is Ibn al-Nadīm who notes this point from his knowledge of Christian books, not a Syrian

Shu'ūbī (Dodge, *The Fihrist of al-Nadīm*, p. 22). Likewise the Syrian Shu'ūbīs could only disappear into the general chorus that all previous prophets had been non-Arabs, and it took doctrinally motivated intellectuals to assign them a special merit in connection with their not having had a prophet of their own (see below, p. 224, n. 15).

42. Not, that is, until the Assyrians used the non-Arab genealogy of the Kurds and the heresy of the Yazīdīs to claim both as 'Islamic Assyrians' (Joseph, *The Assyrians and their Muslim Neighbours*, p. 154).

43. Fiey, *Assyrie chrétienne*, vol. iii, p. 190.

44. As opposed to the Assyria of the classical sources whence the Muslims ultimately derived their scholarly knowledge of the Assyrian past.

45. Sāṭirūn b. Usaytirūn, the Jarmaqī, king of the Suryāniyyūn (Yāqūt b. 'Abdallāh, *Mu'jam al-buldān*, ed. F. Wüstenfeld, Leipzig 1866–73, vol. ii, p. 284; Mas'ūdī in Chwolson, *Die Ssabier*, vol. ii, p. 693).

46. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*², art. 'al-Ḥaḍr'. 'Sāṭirūn' is identified as a Syriac word by Ibn Khalliqān in Chwolson, *Die Ssabier*, vol. ii, p. 695.

47. Ḍayzan b. Mu'āwiya of Quḍā'a (Yaqut, *Mu'jam*, vol. ii, p. 282).

48. 'Alī b. Muḥammad ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī 'l-ta'rīkh*, ed. C. J. Tornberg, Leyden 1867–76, vol. i, p. 209; cf. Pauly-Wissowa, *Realencyclopädie*, art. 'Hatra'.

49. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*², art. 'al-Ḥaḍr'.

50. Yāqūt, *Mu'jam*, vol. ii, p. 284.

51. Mundhir b. Mā' al-samā' was descended from Lakhm according to the Yemenis, but according to our *'ulamā'* he was descended from Sāṭirūn b. al-Usaytirūn, king of Ḥaḍr, a Jarmaqānī from Mosul (A. A. Bevan (ed.), *The Naḳā'id of Jarīr and al-Farazdak*, Leyden 1905–12, p. 885); Nu'mān b. al-Mundhir was of Lakhm according to the Yemenis, but according to the *'ulamā'* of Iraq he was a descendant of Sāṭirūn b. al-Usaytirūn, king of the Suryāniyyūn (*ibid.*, pp. 298f; similarly Mas'ūdī in Chwolson, *Die Ssabier*, vol. ii, p. 693).

52. W. Caskel, *Ǧamharat an-Nasab: Das genealogische Werk des Hišām b. Muḥammad al-Kalbī*, Leyden 1966, vol. ii, p. 84: the ancestor of the kings of Ḥīra was Ḥayqār, a foreigner.

53. F. C. Conybeare *et al.* (ed. and tr.), *The Story of Aḥikar*², Cambridge 1913, pp. lxxivff; Aḥiqar appears as Ḥayqār in the Christian Arabic text. Note also the inclusion of the Nimrodids in the general Shu'ūbī claim that all previous kings had been non-Arabs (Aḥmad b. Muḥammad ibn 'Abd Rabbih, *Kitāb al-'iqd al-farīd*, ed. A. Amīn *et al.*, Cairo 1940–65, vol. iii, p. 404).

54. Notably in the case of Ibn Waḥshiyya, who asserts that the ancient Syriac script was the first divine alphabet, taught by God to Adam (see his *Ancient Alphabets and Hieroglyphic Characters*, ed. and tr. J. Hammer, London 1806, pp. 116 = 42); cf. also the notion of the pure language of the Babylonians before the confusion (Chwolson, *Überreste*, p. 11). Hence the Abū 'Īsā al-Maghribī who believed that the Syrians were the oldest people

in the world and that Adam spoke Syriac also held that their religion was Sabian (Chwolson, *Die Ssabier*, vol. ii, p. 499).

55. Yāqūt, *Mu'jam*, vol. iii, p. 566.

56. Ibn Waḥshiyya got his Babylonian Teucros from the Persians as Tankalūshā (C. Nallino, 'Tracce di opere greche giunte agli Arabi per trafile Pehlevica', in *A Volume of Oriental Studies Presented to E. G. Browne*, Cambridge 1922), and he similarly got his Berossus from the Greeks in the form of Arbiasios (Ibn Waḥshiyya, *Ancient Alphabets*, pp. 61 = 11). But 'Aqar Qūf and Borsippa may represent the survival of an indigenous tradition: 'Aqar Qūf has since been excavated to reveal Dur Kurigalzu, the city of Kurigalzu II (1345–24 B.C.); and Borsippa is of course a well-known Babylonian city (for these readings of *qwq'* and *brs'wy'*, see T. Nöldeke, 'Noch Einiges über die "nabatäische Landwirtschaft"', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 1875, p. 449n).

57. See particularly Dodge, *The Fihrist of al-Nadīm*, pp. 572ff (where the tradition has been through a Persian filter) and Mas'ūdī, *Kitāb murūj al-dhahab*, vol. ii, pp. 95–104 (where it has been through a Greek one).

58. For the 'Kurds' who claim possession of the books of Adam, Ṣafrīth/Daghrīth, Quthāmī, al-Dawānāy (i.e. Adonay) and other Babylonian prophets and sages, see Ibn Waḥshiyya, *Ancient Alphabets*, pp. 131ff = 52ff.

59. The Greeks think themselves better than the Babylonians; but though there are excellent men among them, on the whole they are like cattle (Chwolson, *Überreste*, p. 91).

60. The Jarāmiqa do not speak Babylonian, but a language which they say Mercury (i.e. Nabu) taught them a thousand years ago (*ibid.*, p. 104); they are not sons of Adam, and will never cease to hate the Babylonians (*ibid.*, p. 44). To this extent Ibn al-Nadīm's assignment to Ibn Waḥshiyya of a descent from Sennacherib was rather unfortunate (*Encyclopaedia of Islam*², art. 'Ibn Waḥshiyya').

61. What is true of the Greeks is true of the Syrians (Chwolson, *Überreste*, pp. 90f).

62. As the Persians had done, cf. the absence of Persian attempts to convert the pagans on the one hand, and Ibn Waḥshiyya's respect for the Persians who stick to their own *khurāfāt* on the other (*ibid.*, p. 41).

63. The largescale conversion of Melkites to Monophysitism in the reign of Mu'āwiya recorded by Bar Penkaye (Mingana, *Sources syriaques*, pp. * 147 = * 176) is a striking testimony to this initial viability of Jacobite Syria.

64. For the only exception, see F. Omar, *The 'Abbāsid Caliphate*, Baghdad 1969, p. 316. Rabban-Isho' thought that the Lord had greatly humbled the Syrians, and Bar Ṣalibi answered that His Kingdom is not of this world (Bar Ṣalibi, 'Treatise against the Melchites', pp. 83 = 49f); whence the plausibility of Bishop Aziz Günel's statement that it never even occurred to the Syrians to get mixed up in politics (A. Günel, *Türk Süryaniler Tarihi*, Diyarbekir 1970, p. 322).

65. As with the passing of time they increasingly came to do: for the fervour reached in 1970, see below, p. 212, n. 78.

66. For such Shu'ūbism, see A. Abel, 'La polémique damascénienne et son influence sur les origines de la théologie musulmane', in Cahen, *L'Elaboration de l'Islam*, p. 63; for the impression it made, cf. A. Rücker, 'Das fünfte Buch der Rhetorik des Anṭūn von Tagrit', *Oriens Christianus* 1934, p. 17: the sons of Ishmael consider Syriac poor, limited and insignificant.

67. Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 136.

68. A neat enumeration of the Lord's methods of punishment is given by Joshua the Stylite (*Chronicle*, pp. 1–7 = 1–5), for whom it is the Persians who take on the role of the Assyrian rod of anger. The Arabs still assume the same role according to Jacob of Edessa (cf. the passage referred to above, p. 156, n. 28); but note the changing attitudes towards the Arab conquests betrayed by the anonymous author of the 'Spurious Life of James' on the one hand and Mar Cyriac in his 'Writing about the same holy Mar James' of A.D. 741 on the other: in the first Jacob Baradaeus promises that the Lord will drive away the Persians from Edessa as he drove away Sennacherib from Jerusalem; whereas in the second the Persians take all the lands east of the Euphrates by divine decree to punish Phocas for his expulsion of the orthodox (both texts ed. and tr. E. W. Brooks, in *Patrologia Orientalis*, vol. xix, pp. 263, 268f).

69. Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, vol. iv, p. 410 = vol. ii, pp. 412f; Bar Hebraeus, *Chronicon Ecclesiasticum*, vol. i, cols. 273 = 274. Whereas before it was not for love of the Arabs that God had allowed them to conquer Syria, now it was not in punishment for their sins that he had humiliated the Syrians (Bar Ṣalibi, 'Treatise against the Melchites', pp. 84 = 51). For other evidence of hostility towards the Crusaders, see C. Cahen, *La Syrie du nord a l'époque des croisades*, Paris 1940, pp. 338ff.

70. So at least if Brockelmann is correct in his interpretation of Jacob of Edessa's grammar (Brockelmann, *Geschichte der christlichen Litteraturen des Orients*, p. 49); but certainly by the ninth century (cf. R. M. Haddad, *Syrian Christians in Muslim Society*, Princeton, N.J. 1970, p. 15n).

71. The Melkites began already in the eighth century with Theodore Abū Qurra, the Jacobites followed suit towards the end of the ninth and the beginning of the tenth with Ḥabīb b. Khidma and Yaḥyā b. 'Adi (Graf, *Geschichte der christlichen arabischen Literatur*, vol. ii, pp. 220ff).

72. Brockelmann, *Geschichte der christlichen Litteraturen des Orients*, p. 55; cf. John of Mardin (d. 1165), who set up schools to revive 'the Syriac of our fatherland', in his day forgotten, from its condition of death (A. Vööbus, 'Neues Licht über das Restaurationswerk des Jōḥannān von Mardē', *Oriens Christianus* 1963, p. 132).

73. Bar Hebraeus is the last Syriac author worthy of the name.

74. J. Nasrallah, 'Syriens et Suriens', in *Symposium Syriacum* (= Orientalia Christiana Analecta, vol. cxcvii), Rome 1974, p. 490.

75. Cf. the estimates in Haddad, *Syrian Christians in Muslim Society*, p. 10.

76. D. Hopwood, *The Russian Presence in Syria and Palestine, 1843–1914*,

Oxford 1969, p. 27: the Melkites denied being Arabised Greeks and claimed descent from the (Monophysite) Arabs of Ghassān and the (Nestorian) Arabs of Ḥīra. When this genealogy was adopted is not clear; but the Melkites had adopted Arabic for their liturgy before the seventeenth century (Haddad, *Syrian Christians in Muslim Society*, p. 20).

77. The exceptions are the Maronites, who still have Syriac as their liturgical language (*loc. cit.*), and isolated pockets of spoken Syriac in the Lebanon and Ṭūr 'Abdīn (see Rosenthal, *Die Aramäistische Forschung*, pp. 160ff, 261).

78. It was thanks to the Syrians giving 'Umar the keys to Mesopotamia that he was able to occupy it, so he wrote a great charter for them; to perpetuate the memory of this deliverance down the ages, the Syrians gave 'Umar the by-name 'Fārūq', a Syriac term meaning 'deliverer' which the Arabs pronounced exactly as they took it from Syriac (Günel, *Türk Süryaniler Tarihi*, p. 322). Note that the Syrians in Turkey are Turks, just as those in Syria are Arabs; whereas 'Turkish Armenians', for all that many of them spoke only Turkish, is a contradiction in terms.

79. For the isolated instance of Dīk al-Jinn see Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, vol. i, p. 144.

80. Jacob of Edessa already has the ruling that Christians who become Hagarenes or pagans and subsequently reconvert do not have to be rebaptised (Kayser, *Die Canones Jacobs von Edessa*, pp. 8 = 37). Pseudo-Methodius also complains of conversion, *sc.* to Islam (E. Sackur, *Sibyllinische Texte und Forschungen*, Halle 1898, p. 86). See also above, p. 160, n. 57, and p. 13.

81. The inhabitants of Aleppo abandoned their faith about 798 (Bar Hebraeus, *Chronicon Ecclesiasticum*, vol. i, cols. 337 = 338; for Edessene conversions about the same time, see Segal, *Edessa*, p. 201, and especially p. 206, where they convert in groups of ten to three hundred.

82. See above, p. 211, n. 66.

83. The only Syrian, or quasi-Syrian treasure to come through was a much faded Zenobia (F. Müller, *Studien über Zenobia nach orientalischen Quellen*, Kirchhain 1902); in this version Rome is reduced to a mere extra in an intertribal Arab war, and all Zenobia retains of her Hellenism is a Greek genealogy and a Roman suicide, both incorrect.

84. H. Lammens, 'Le "Sofiânî", héros national des Arabes syriens', *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 1923.

85. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*², art. 'Abū Tammām Ḥabīb b. Aws'.

86. L. Zuwiyya Yamak, *The Syrian Social Nationalist Party*, Cambridge Mass. 1966, pp. 76ff.

87. Cf. the 'Alawite Arab nationalist Arsūzī, who 'took up only what was pre-Islamic in Islam' (E. Kedourie, *Arab Political Memoirs and Other Studies*, London 1974, p. 200).

88. Whence the slogan 'to Palestine with the Copts!' (E. Kedourie, *The*

Chatham House Version and other Middle-Eastern Studies, London 1970, p. 200); cf. the accusation that the Mar Shimun was plotting with Zionism to establish an Assyrian state like Israel in the heart of the Arab world (*Proche Orient chrétien* 1951, p. 140, and compare also Joseph, *The Nestorians and their Muslim Neighbours*, p. 224).

NOTES TO CHAPTER 10

1. Kayser, *Die Canones Jacobs von Edessa*, p. 29, question 58: may a priest instruct the children of the Mahgraye? Jacob's answer is affirmative (Syriac text in A. P. de Lagarde, *Reliquiae iuris ecclesiastici antiquissimae*, Vienna 1856, p. 140).

2. Fiey, *Assyrie chrétienne*, vol. iii, p. 119n.

3. Cf. above, pp. 134f.

4. Cf. the alliance between Yazīd III and the Ghaylāniyya (J. van Ess, 'Les Qadarites et la Ġailāniya de Yazid III', *Studia Islamica* 1970).

5. The Syrian political ideal is represented by 'Umar II, with his fear of God and hell-fire, his abstention from food and women, his copious tears and general odour of nazirite asceticism (Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, *Sīrat 'Umar*, especially pp. 29–50); it was an ideal which, unlike the Persian monarchic tradition, easily went down as *rāshid*.

6. In this the Syrians are not unique. A more recent shot from a settled Christian background is that of the Rastafarians of Jamaica. The attempt includes an Old Testament ethnicity for the black man as a reincarnation of the ancient Israelites, an ethnic appropriation of the Old Testament prophets, a promised land in Ethiopia as against an exile in Jamaica whence the messiah Haile Selassie is to ingather them, Amharic as the sacred language, and a certain observation of the sacred Levitic law (see L. E. Barrett, *The Rastafarians: A Study in Messianic Cultism in Jamaica*, Puerto Rico 1969, especially pp. 128ff). But the black man has of course lost his tribes as much as the Syrians, and despite some brandishing of the notion of *jihād* (no doubt via the Black Muslims), the Rastafarians can only wait in passivity for their redemption.

7. Note the contrast between medieval Persia, which for all its conversion to Islam is haunted by the Sasanid after-image, and medieval Syria, which for all its fidelity to Christianity is haunted by Islam. Bar Ṣalibi with his rabbinic rejection of earthly kings, his excessive reliance on scripture, and his dislike of church music and hymns, is a particularly striking example ('Treatise against the Melchites', *passim*).

8. M. J. Kister, 'The Seven Odes: Some notes on the compilation of the *Mu'allaqāt*', *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* 1969, p. 29.

9. G. E. von Grunebaum, *Islam: Essays in the Nature and Growth of a Cultural Tradition*[2], London 1961, p. 35.

10. Rücker, 'Das fünfte Buch der Rhetorik des Anṭūn von Tagrit', p. 17.

11. Buḥturī's Ṭā'ī descent may very well of course have been genuine; but he

learnt his neo-classical style from Abū Tammām (*Encyclopaedia of Islam*², art. 'al-Buḥturī').

12. A Mesopotamian *mawlā* of Azd or Bāhila, he was governor of the Jazīra for 'Umar II, teacher of his children, and one of the principal authorities for the manners and customs of this caliph (Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, index, *s.n.*; Muḥammad ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitāb al-muḥabbar*, ed. I. Lichtenstädter, Hyderabad 1942, p. 478; Yazīd b. Muḥammad al-Azdī, *Ta'rīkh Mawṣil*, ed. A. Ḥabība, Cairo 1967, p. 37).

13. Ismā'īl b. 'Ubaydallāh ibn Abī'l-Muhājir was a *mawlā* from Damascus, teacher of the children of 'Abd al-Malik, governor of North Africa for 'Umar II, converter of the Berbers, and with his sons famed as an authority on Koran reading (Muḥammad ibn Ḥibbān al-Bustī, *Kitāb mashāhīr 'ulamā' al-amṣār*, ed. M. Fleichhammer, Wiesbaden 1959, p. 179; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Kitāb al-muḥabbar*, p. 476; Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 231; Ibn 'Asākir, *Ta'rīkh madīnat Dimashq*, vol. ii, p. 50).

14. G. E. von Grunebaum. *Medieval Islam: A Study in Cultural Orientation*², Chicago 1961, pp. 294–319.

15. J. Schacht, 'Droit byzantin et droit musulman', in *XII Convegno 'Volta'*, Rome 1957.

16. Ḥammād was an Iranian from Iraq (*Encyclopaedia of Islam*², *s.n.*).

17. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*², *s.n.* Cf. also the cases of 'Abd al-Ṣamad b. 'Abd al-A'lā, whose grandfather was a prisoner from 'Ayn al-Tamr, and who was tutor, boon companion and poet to Walīd b. Yazīd (Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, I, p. 2122; II, pp. 1741, 1744); Ḥammād al-Ajrad, a Kūfan *mawlā* poet who similarly came to Walīd's court (*Encyclopaedia of Islam*², s.n.); or Bashshār b. Burd, whose Shu'ūbism reached Syria only via the Umayyad princes in Iraq (*ibid.*, *s.n.*).

18. Dodge, *The First of al-Nadīm*, p. 194; *Encyclopaedia of Islam*¹, art. 'Wahb b. Munabbih'; *Encyclopaedia of Islam*², art. 'al-Awzā'ī'.

19. For these Syrian *ahl al-ṣuffa*, see *ibid.*, *s.nn.*

20. Madelung, *al-Qāsim*, pp. 239f; note the characteristic concatenation of free will, grace, Arab descent and *Sufyāniyya*.

21. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*², art. 'Ḳadariyya'.

22. Cf. the failure of Syrian historiography to survive as an independent tradition: both 'Awāna and Haytham b. 'Adī ended up in Baghdad (*ibid.*, *s.nn.*). That no Syrian tradition survived the change of capital is not surprising: unlike the Persians, they could not bear etiolation.

23. F. E. Peters, *Aristotle and the Arabs: The Aristotelian tradition in Islam*, New York 1968, pp. 41ff; cf. N. Rescher, *The Development of Arabic Logic*, Pittsburg, Pa. 1964, p. 20.

24. M. Molé, *Les mystiques musulmans*, Paris 1965, p. 21. For the *Fortleben* of Theophilus and Mary as *malāmatī* saints, see *ibid.*, pp. 10ff. For the distinction

between *walīs* by law and *walīs* by grace known to Philoxenus but more popular in Iraq, see *ibid.*, p. 16.

25. Marquet, 'Imâmat, Résurrection et Hiérarchie selon les Ikhwân as-Safâ', p. 139.

26. Notably Yaḥyā b. 'Adī and 'Īsā ibn Zur'a, both of whom had to write apologetics for their study of logic (N. Rescher, *Studies in Arabic Philosophy*, Pittsburg, Pa. 1968, pp. 39f).

27. Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, I, pp. 2923f; though at pp. 2924f he is made to deny his naziriteship.

28. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*², art. 'Ḳadariyya'.

29. *Ibid.*, art. 'Bakkā''.

30. *Ibid.*, art. 'Djamīl al-'Udhrī'; note the contrast between the aboriginally Arab character of Platonic love as it appears in the Syrian Jamīl and the recognisably Platonic definition which came through in Iraq (von Grunebaum, *Medieval Islam*, p. 317).

31. The cultural implications of the distinction between priests and rabbis will be analysed in chapter 13

32. Abū 'Ubayda's *Kitāb al-tāj* must be one of the earliest examples (Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, vol. i, p. 182).

33. Already with Bashshār b. Burd (*Encyclopaedia of Islam*², *s.n.*).

34. Paul, *Ecrits de Qumran et sectes juives aux premiers siècles de l'Islam*, pp. 15f and 145n. The caliph in this story is Manṣūr.

35. A. Guillaume, 'A Debate between Christian and Muslim Doctors', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, centenary supplement, 1924. The caliph in question was Ma'mūn.

36. Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā al-Ṣūlī, *Adab al-ḳuttāb*, ed. M. B. al-Atharī, Cairo and Baghdad 1341, p. 193. The vizier was Yaḥyā b. Khālid al-Barmakī.

37. As suggested by Ibn al-Muqaffa' (see S. D. Goitein, *Studies in Islamic History and Institutions*, Leyden 1966, pp. 163ff).

38. For clientage as an instance of the latter, see Crone, *The Mawālī in the Umayyad Period*, chapter 4.

39. For an instructive example, see Appendix II.

40. For the role attributed to *ereṣ Ishma'el*, see Schacht, *Origins*, especially p. 349.

41. M. Ullmann, *Die Medizin im Islam*, Leyden and Köln 1970, pp. 184ff. Contrast Christianity, where despite the existence of actual scriptural foundations for a *ṭibb nabawī*, the attempt to develop such a category in opposition to secular medicine is reserved to primitives and cranks.

42. See his *Radd 'alā'l-naṣārā*, in J. Finkel (ed.), *Three Essays*, Cairo 1926, pp. 16f.

43. R. Walzer, *Greek into Arabic: Essays in Islamic Philosophy*, Oxford 1962, pp. 172–4.

44. So the twelfth-century Spanish scholar Ibn Ṭumlūs, with reference to the sciences of the ancients, i.e. philosophy (I. Goldziher, 'Stellung der alten islamischen Orthodoxie zu den antiken Wissenschaften', *Abhandlungen der königlich preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Philosophisch-historische Klasse, Jahrgang 1915, Berlin 1916, p. 3).

45. The two dilemmas were of course very different inasmuch as the Arabs had no lack of a nation with which to nationalise. Like the Romans, the Arabs were a people with a *Jāhilī* identity who had come out politically on top of civilisation; and to that extent they might have accepted the cosmopolitan tradition for what it was – as indeed they did in Ma'mūn's Baghdad. Among the Arabs, as among the Romans, Stoicism could have softened the literalist rigidity of the native law and sublimated their literalist cult into symbol, just as Homer could have provided the model for the epic reformulation of the barbarian past (cf. Mahdi's interest in Homer, above, pp. 64f). That the dealings of the Romans and the Arabs with the Greek tradition have in actual fact so little in common is an indication of the extent to which the rise of Judaic monotheism had transformed the cultural potentialities of the relationship of barbarians to civilisation.

46. Runciman, *The Last Byzantine Renaissance*, pp. 78f.

47. Walzer, *L'Eveil de la philosophie islamique*, p. 19.

48. Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, vol. i, p. 197; *id.*, 'Stellung', pp. 5, 17, 40f. Compare also the defensive tone of Kindī's letter to Mu'taṣim: 'We ought not to be ashamed of applauding the truth, nor of appropriating the truth, from whatever source it may come, even if it be from remote races and nations alien to us' (cited in A. J. Arberry, *Revelation and Reason in Islam*, London 1957, pp. 34f).

49. Cf. Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, vol. i, p. 56, and H. Ringgren, *Studies in Arabian Fatalism*, Uppsala 1955. And this despite the explicit Koranic condemnation of the poets (26:224). The streak of hostility to the pagan tradition of Arabia in Islam is as marginal as the streak of hostility to the pagan tradition of Hellas in Christianity.

50. 'Who was Kindī to rush to the aid of God's word with the tools of mere human reason?' as against 'Who was Philoponus to yap at the heels of the great philosophers?' (cf. Walzer, *Greek into Arabic*, pp. 191f).

51. Goldziher, 'Stellung', pp. 35–9. Cf. the ill-assured character of Ghazālī's advocacy of the use of logic in the religious sciences (*ibid.*, pp. 29–33).

52. For this unholy alliance aimed at the destruction of the category of celestial causality which gave the Hellenic universe order and beauty, see M. Fakhry, *Islamic Occasionalism and its Critique by Averröes and Aquinas*, London 1958, chapter 1f; cf. the lines of William Blake:

> The Atoms of Democritus
> And Newton's Particles of light
> Are sands upon the Red sea shore,
> Where Israel's tents do shine so bright.

If on the other hand one accepts the arguments for an Indian origin of the atoms of *kalām* (S. Pines, *Beiträge sur islamischen Atomenlehre*, Berlin 1936, pp. 102–22), the unholiness of the alliance remains: in India as in Greece, the point of atoms is to generate a universe which operates without supernatural guidance.

53. Ş. Mardin, *The Genesis of Young Ottoman Thought*, Princeton, N.J. 1962, p. 238.

54. Cf. the changing meaning of philosophical esotericism: what in antiquity had come to represent the condescension of a socially accredited intellectual elite towards the limited capacities of simpler souls becomes in Islam something verging on paranoia (compare the benignly patronising tone of the term *simpliciores* as elucidated in W. Jaeger, *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia*, Cambridge, Mass. 1962, pp. 129–31, with the fear of the *'āmma* that permeates the culture described in N. R. Keddie, 'Symbol and Sincerity in Islam', *Studia Islamica* 1963).

55. B. H. Warmington, *Carthage*², London 1969, p. 152. Unlike Rome, Carthage had its own Semitic civilisation, and so was in no need of a Greek one.

56. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*², *s.n.* (Ibn Tufayl's story).

57. Cf. above, p. 131.

58. Thus the Prophet appealed to both the red and the black of mankind, and so the non-Arabs were half of Islam right from the outset (Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, *Kitāb al-'iqd*, vol. iii, pp. 406f).

59. For his Khārijism, see H. A. R. Gibb, 'The Social Significance of the Shuubiya', in his *Studies on the Civilization of Islam*, London 1962, pp. 67ff; for his *Kitāb al-tāj*, cf. above, p. 215, n. 32.

60. Everything of importance had been said in the works of previous generations (Goitein, *Studies in Islamic History and Institutions*, p. 152).

61. *Ibid.*, pp. 152ff.

62. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*², *s.n.*

63. Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, *Kitāb al-'iqd*, vol. iii, pp. 404ff.

64. For a vivid presentation of the Shu'ūbī claims see Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, vol. i, chapters 3–5.

65. Or to pick up a contemporary image, the persuasive powers of people who were 'dragged to Paradise in chains' were necessarily limited (Bukhārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, vol. ii, p. 250; Ibn 'Abd Rabbih, *Kitāb al-'iqd*, vol. iii, p. 412).

66. A notable instance is the *dīwān*.

67. Cf. below, p. 226, n. 40.

68. A 'kernel of derangement' from the point of view of the rabbis (cf. Gibb, *Studies on the Civilization of Islam*, p. 72).

69. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*², art. 'Ibn al-Muqaffa'".

70. The Islamic mirrors for princes and similar sources are acquainted with the *farr-i īzadī*, but they also bring out the bleak lack of any historical dimension in such legitimacy as they claim for kings: the assertion of an arbitrary and histor-

ically unmediated divine choice as the determinant of who rules was a great deal more appropriate to Islamic Iran that it would have been in Sasanid Iran or medieval Europe (for tags of the type 'God chooses someone from among the people', 'He gives it [kingship] to whomsoever He wills', see for example A. K. S. Lambton, 'The Theory of Kingship in the *Naṣīḥat ul-Mulūk* of Ghazālī', *The Islamic Quarterly* 1954, pp. 49, 52).

71. R. C. Zaehner, *Hindu and Muslim Mysticism*, London 1960.

72. Cf. the *ahl al-ṣuffa*.

73. Only European scholars have tried to find the origins of Islamic art in Arabia (cf. O. Grabar, *The Formation of Islamic Art*, New Haven, Conn. 1973, p. 80).

74. For the exodus of Nabonidus from his *qarya ẓālima*, cf. C. J. Gadd, 'The Harran Inscription of Nabonidus', *Anatolian Studies* 1958, pp. 57ff.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 11

1. J. Lassner, *The Topography of Baghdad in the Early Middle Ages*, Detroit 1970, p. 128.

2. It is of course true that, alongside their indigenous castes and concepts, the Indians acquired their devotional cults from the Dravidians; but this is more like the early Greek acquisition of Dionysus from Thrace than their later acquisition of Yahweh from the Jews.

3. There was admittedly a Dānishmendid who styled himself 'malik of all Romania' (S. Vryonis, *The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh through the Fifteenth Century*, Berkeley 1971, p. 473); but there is no Seljūq parallel, and Ḥasan b. Gabras was no Greek Ibn al-Muqaffa' (*ibid.*, p. 231).

4. Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, vol. i, p. 128.

5. Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, pp. 373ff.

6. J. Harmatta, 'The middle Persian-Chinese Bilingual Inscription from Hsian and the Chinese-Sāsānian Relations', in *Atti del Convegno Internazionale sul tema: La Persia nel Medioevo.*

7. Sebeos, *Histoire*, p. 143.

8. *Ut animae nascentibus, ita populis fatales genii dividuntur* (Symmachus, cited in P. Courcelle, 'Anti-Christian Arguments and Christian Platonism from Arnobius to St. Ambrose', in Momigliano, *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century*, p. 175).

9. Contrast the fate of Marduk, whose sponsorship of a series of Babylonian pretenders got him thoroughly broken into the ground.

10. Or again, compare the relationship between Buddhism and Ceylon. In contrast to Zoroastrianism vis-à-vis Iran, Buddhism had nothing to say about Ceylon in its metropolitan scriptures. But in contrast to Islam vis-à-vis Iran, it

gave the Ceylonese *carte blanche* to say what they liked about themselves in the provincial church history. Buddhism was not intrinsically for or against Ceylon, it was simply above it. But Islam was against Iran as much as Zoroastrianism had been for it.

11. The contrast between the position of the Indians under Spanish rule and that of the Greeks under Ottoman rule is instructive: the *republica de los Indios* represented the formal toleration of a *political* distinctiveness within a religiously homogeneous empire, the Orthodox *millet* the formal toleration of a *religious* distinctiveness within a politically homogeneous empire.

12. Cf. above, p. 130.

13. E. Sachau, *Zur Geschichte von Khwārizm*, *Abhandlungen der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Philologisch-historische Klasse, vol. lxxiv, Berlin 1873.

14. For the wider outbreak of Sāsānid descent among the Iranian dynasties of this period, see C. E. Bosworth, 'The Heritage of Rulership in early Islamic Iran and the Search for Dynastic Connections with the Past', *Iran* 1973; even the Arab Yazīdids of Sharwān became Sasanid *da'īs* (*ibid.*, p. 60).

15. Now how the first Caspian adventurers had talked in terms of an anti-Islamic restoration (Madelung, 'The Assumption of the Title Shāhānshāh', pp. 86–8); compare the vivid hope of such a restoration that finds expression in the ninth-century Zoroastrian writings (H. W. Bailey, *Zoroastrian Problems in the Ninth-Century Books*[2], Oxford 1971, pp. 195ff).

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 80–92, 162ff. The indeterminacy of the evidence on both these points is unfortunate, but not without its own significance. In origin, Zoroastrian dualism was in intellectual terms a solution to a problem alternatively soluble by the concepts of the Greeks and Indians. But because for historical reasons the Zoroastrian solution took the form of an ethnic theism, it easily made the transition from membership of the original conceptual set to membership of the new monotheist set that arose from the Judaic tradition. The analogy between Zoroaster and Moses as ethnic lawgivers claiming a theist sanction was already remarked by the Greeks (Bidez and Cumont, *Les mages hellénisés*, vol. ii, p. 30). When the Judaic model became normative, the Zoroastrians had only to press the analogy: the philosophy of the Magi became their theology. And it is a back-handed compliment to the force of the analogy that the Christians and Muslims should have responded by branding Zoroaster as a Jew (*ibid.*, vol. i, p. 50).

17. Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, vol. i, p. 130.

18. The Ḥusaynids thus have the edge on the Ḥasanids by virtue of the fact that a *shahrbānūya* was their maternal ancestor (G. Le Strange and R. A. Nicholson (eds.), *The Fārsnāma of Ibnu'l-Balkhī*, London 1921, p. 4). Cf. also the Carmathian view that God does not like the Arabs because they killed Ḥusayn and prefers the subjects of Khusraw because only they defended the rights of the imams (Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, vol. i, p. 162).

19. Bar Penkaye in Mingana, *Sources syriaques*, pp.*156–68 = *183–95

(no information is given regarding the doctrine of Mukhtār). There is thus a fair-sized grain of truth in the unfashionable view of Ibn Ḥazm: 'The reason why most of these sects deserted the religion of Islam is, at bottom, this. The Persians originally were the masters of a large kingdom and had the upper hand over all the nations . . . But when . . . their empire was taken away from them by the Arabs . . . they made up their minds to beguile Islam . . . ' (I. Friedlaender, 'The Heterodoxies of the Shiites in the Presentation of Ibn Ḥazm' *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 1907, p. 35).

20. He was, according to Mas'ūdī, a descendant of the Persian kings, and from the same Iṣfahān whence the astrologers predicted the rise of a Persian dynasty which would overthrow the caliphate (Madelung, 'The Assumption of the Title Shāhānshāh', p. 87n).

21. J. Aubin, 'La politique religieuse des Ṣafavides', in T. Fahd *et al.*, *Le Shî'isme imâmite*, Paris 1970, p. 240.

22. Madelung, 'The Assumption of the Title Shāhānshāh', p. 175n.

23. The seventeenth-century author Quṭb al-dīn Ashkevarī cautiously suggests a parallel between the Zoroastrian Sōshans and the Imāmī mahdi (H. Corbin, 'L'idée du Paraclet en philosophie iranienne', in *Atti del Convegno Internazionale sul tema: La Persia nel Medioevo*, p. 58). But this is something of a find; whereas the idea that the Ismā'īlī imam is an incarnation of Viṣṇu is a commonplace of Nizārism in India.

24. E. Gellner, *Saints of the Atlas*, London 1969, p. 295.

25. For these *khurāfāt al-'ajam* see Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, vol. i, pp. 135f.

26. Contrast the readiness of Buddhism to provide footprints of its founder in accordance with the exigencies of political geography.

27. For his status in the hierarchy, see Bailey, *Zoroastrian Problems*, p. 78.

28. Such at least was the view of the Ṣāḥib b. 'Abbād (I. Goldziher, 'Die Śu'ûbijja unter den Muhammedanern in Spanien', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 1899, p. 605n).

29. For this development see particularly G. Lazard, *La langue des plus anciens monuments de la prose persane*, Paris 1963, introduction and part one, and *id.*, *Les premiers poètes persans (IX^e–X^e siècles)*, Paris and Tehran 1964, vol. i.

30. Even direct translation is rare (for an isolated but significant example, see V. Minorsky, 'The older Preface to the *Shāh-nāmeh*', in his *Iranica: Twenty Articles*, Tehran 1964). We know more of Pahlavi literature from translations into Arabic than into Persian.

31. As for example in the Greek verses of Sulṭān Veled (Vryonis, *The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor*, p. 381n).

32. So Ibn al-Athīr al-Jazarī (Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, vol. i, p. 160n).

33. A comparison which brings out the ideological, if not perhaps the literary, gains to be had from composing one's national epic after the event: neither the *Iliad* nor the *Mahābhārata* are encouraging as charters for national unity.

34. Sebeos, *Histoire*, p. 149 (referring to the first civil war).

35. D. Dennett, *Conversion and Poll-tax in Early Islam*, Cambridge, Mass. 1950, chapter 5.

36. Apart from the forced conversions attributed to Aṣbagh and 'Umar II (C. H. Becker, 'Historische Studien über das Londoner Aphroditowerk', *Der Islam* 1911, p. 365), the most notable instance is that of the 24,000 Christians who were brought to convert by Ḥafṣ b. Walīd (Basset, 'Le Synaxaire arabe jacobite', in *Patrologia Orientalis*, vol. xvi, p. 233; Kindī, *Kitāb al-wulāt*, pp. 84ff; Severus ibn al-Muqaffa', *History of the Patriarchs*, in *Patrologia Orientalis*, vol. v, pp. 116f), though some also converted with the arrival of the 'Abbāsids (*ibid.*, p. 189).

37. I. M. Lapidus, 'The Conversion of Egypt to Islam', *Israel Oriental Studies* 1972; C. H. Becker, 'Die Arabisierung', in his *Beiträge zur Geschichte Ägyptens unter dem Islam*, Strassburg 1902f. The evidence relating to conversion in Ziadeh, 'L'Apocalypse de Samuel', pp. 389 = 402, seems likely to refer to the Fāṭimid period.

38. M. Meyerhof, 'Von Alexandrien nach Baghdad', in *Sitzungsberichte der Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Philologisch-historische Klasse, vol. xxiii, Berlin 1930.

39. Dodge, *The Fihrist of al-Nadīm*, p. 581.

40. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*², *s.n.*

41. The eleventh-century Egyptian Ibn Riḍwān thus had to make an immense virtue of being an autodidact in his controversy with Ibn Buṭlān, the distinguished Christian philosopher of Baghdad (J. Schacht, 'Über den Hellenismus in Baghdad und Cairo im 11. Jahrhundert', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 1936). The Fāṭimids gave the Coptic church something of an intellectual Indian summer; but the thirteenth-century Buṭrus b. al-Rāhib, who was about the nearest thing to a Coptic Ibn Buṭlān, typically directed his knowledge of philosophy to combating it (Rescher, *The Development of Arabic Logic*, pp. 205f).

42. Schacht, *Origins*, p. 9.

43. Ghaylān was of course a Copt, but the Ghaylāniyya was a Syrian, not an Egyptian movement; note also that only Egypt and Khurāsān had no representatives among the Qadarīs (*Encyclopaedia of Islam*², art. 'Ḳadariyya').

44. A rare instance of Coptic in Arabic script is evidence precisely of the loss of Coptic in *Christianity*, not of efforts to preserve it in *Islam* (see for this text E. Galtier, 'Coptica-Arabica', *Bulletin de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale* 1906, pp. 91ff).

45. W. B. Bishai, 'The Transition from Coptic to Arabic', *The Muslim World* 1963, p. 149.

46. G. Wiet (ed.), *L'Egypte de Murtadi fils du Gaphiphe*, Paris 1953. For the author see Y. Rāġib's note in *Arabica* 1974.

47. F. Cumont, *L'Egypte des astrologues*, Brussels 1937. Note also that the Muslim Horapollon is not an Egyptian but a Chaldean astrologer: it is Ibn Waḥshiyya who flaunts Egyptian hieroglyphs in his *Ancient Alphabets*.

48. Baron von Rosen's suggestion that Ibn Waṣīf Shāh's materials are of Shu'ūbī origin was accepted by Goldziher (*Muslim Studies*, vol. i, pp. 147f). Also significant in this connection is the account of Nebuchadnezzar's invasion of Egypt found in Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam and many other Arabic sources (cf. the references given by Wiet, *L'Egypte de Murtadi*, p. 28n). This account clearly derives from a version close to that given by John of Nikiu of the invasion of Egypt by Cambyses (Charles, *The Chronicle of John, Bishop of Nikiu*, chapter li), which itself represents an advanced stage of the myth of the destructiveness of the Persian conquest which first appears in Herodotus (see F. K. Kienitz, *Die politische Geschichte Ägyptens vom 7. bis zum 4. Jahrhundert vor der Zeitwende*, Berlin 1953, p. 55n). John of Nikiu's account is in turn clearly related to the Coptic story of the invasion of Cambyses/Nebuchadnezzar (see above, p. 54). The conflation of Cambyses and Nebuchadnezzar, which in John of Nikiu takes the form of identifying the former as Nebuchadnezzar II, runs through the whole tradition; it goes back at least to the early fifth century after Christ (A. Lincke, 'Kambyses in der Sage, Litteratur und Kunst des Mittelalters', in *Aegyptiaca: Festschrift für Georg Ebers*, Leipzig 1897, p. 45), and is still explicit in a few of the Arabic sources.

49. Cf. the residual Egyptian patriotism suggested by Ibn Ṭūlūn's recommendation regarding the employment of native rather than Iraqi secretaries in Egypt (Z. M. Hassan, *Les Tulunides*, Paris 1933, p. 215).

50. Cf. above, p. 212, n. 88.

51. Cf. the attitude of Ma'mūn, who had the pyramids opened on the occasion of his visit to Egypt.

52. Cf. the disappointed comment of the Ṣāḥib b. 'Abbād on the *'Iqd* of Ibn 'Abd Rabbih: 'It's just our own goods they're sending back to us' (E. Lévi-Provençal, *Histoire de l'Espagne musulmane*, Paris and Leyden 1950–3, vol. iii, p. 493).

53. G. Levi della Vida, 'I Mozarabi tra Occidente e Islam', in *L'Occidente e l'Islam nell'alto Medioevo* (= Centro Italiano di Studi sull'alto Medioevo, Settimane di Studi, no. xii), Spoleto 1965.

54. Though one tenth-century writer took pride in his royal Gothic descent (Lévi-Provençal, *Histoire*, vol. i, p. 76).

55. *Ibid.*, vol. ii, pp. 225–39.

56. S. M. Stern, *Hispano-Arabic Strophic Poetry*, Oxford 1974.

57. Goldziher, 'Die Šu'ûbijja unter den Muhammedanern in Spanien', p. 608. Compare the way in which Ṭurṭūshī, writing on kingship in Andalusia, does so in terms of a Persian, not a Gothic model (Lambton, 'Islamic Mirrors for Princes', p. 424); and less certainly, the way in which the *muwallad* Ibn Ḥazm lays claim to Persian ancestry (Lévi-Provençal, *Histoire*, vol. iii, p. 182).

58. *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 113n. Cf. the lack of local colour in the heterodoxies of the mystic Ibn Masarra (*ibid.*, vol. iii, pp. 485f).

59. *Ibid.*, p. 480.

60. Cf. R. Brunschvig, 'Polémiques médiévales autour du rite de Mālik', *Al-Andalus* 1950.

61. Cf. above, p. 183, n. 43.

62. Compare Lévi-Provençal, *Histoire*, vol. ii, pp. 127, 224f, and M. Talbi, *L'émirat Aghlabide 184–296/800–909: Histoire politique*, Paris 1966.

63. Lévi-Provençal, *Histoire*, vol. i, pp. 269f.

64. See for example *ibid.*, pp. 342ff.

65. *Ibid.*, p. 377 (and cf. vol. ii, p. 16n). He was of course a political opportunist; but political opportunists presumably have an eye for ideological opportunities.

66. S. Piggott, *The Druids*, London 1968, pp. 114, 127.

67. Lévi-Provençal, *Histoire*, vol. ii, p. 51.

68. Cf. the translation of the Psalms into *rajaz* (Levi della Vida, 'I Mozarabi tra Occidente e Islam', p. 680; compare the use of classical metres for religious poetry in Byzantium, Hussey, *Church and Learning*, p. 33). Clearly Virgil was more to late Roman Spain than Homer to late Roman Syria.

69. So the 'Sad Dar', tr. E. W. West, in *Pahlavi Texts* (= M. Müller (ed.), *The Sacred Books of the East*, vols. xif), New York 1901, part three, p. 346; cf. Bailey, *Zoroastrian Problems*, p. 162.

70. T. Lewicki, 'Prophètes, devins et magiciens chez les Berbères médiévaux', *Folia Orientalia* 1965, pp. 7–12.

71. Note the equivalence of Berber prophecy and heresy suggested by the events of the Kutāma rebellion of 911f: the Fāṭimid ruler having executed the *dā'ī* who had rallied the Berbers to Ismā'īlism, they put at their head a Berber prophet whose residence was declared a *qibla* (*ibid.*, pp. 9f).

72. C. Bekri, 'Le Kharijisme berbère. Quelques aspects du royaume rustumide', *Annales de l'Institut d'études orientales* 1957. Note also how North African Ibāḍism provides the locus for the appearance (or reappearance?) of a religious institution unknown elsewhere in Islam, the 'Azzāba (*Encyclopaedia of Islam*², art. 'Ḥalḳa').

73. G. Marçais, *La Berbérie musulmane et l'Orient au moyen âge*, Paris 1946, pp. 119f.

74. Cf. W. H. C. Frend, *The Donatist Church: A Movement of Protest in Roman North Africa*, Oxford 1952, pp. 172–8.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 12

1. Delahaye, 'Passio sanctorum sexaginta martyrum', pp. 301f.

2. Compare the doctrinal aggressiveness with which, in the account given by Sebeos, the Hagarene ruler invites the Byzantine emperor to 'convert to the great God whom I serve, the God of our father Abraham' (see above, p. 6).

3. Nau, 'Le texte grec des récits du moine Anastase', pp. 87–9 = *id.*, Les

récits inédits du moine Anastase', pp. 45f. Incidentally, the reference elsewhere in the same text (pp. 82 = 38) to Saracens on Mt Sinai blaspheming the holy place suggests that they did not as yet recognise the Christian identification of the mountain.

4. Cf. the whiff of *islām* in the behavioural identity of surrender and conversion.

5. Compare the report of the Nestorian patriarch Isho'yahb III that the Mazūn of Oman were being permitted to remain Christians only on the surrender of half their property, and contrast his emphasis on the favourable attitude of the conquerors to the church in his own area (Išō'yahb III, *Liber Epistularum*, pp. 251 = 182; F. Nau, 'Maronites, Mazonites et Maranites', *Revue de l'Orient chrétien* 1904, pp. 269–72).

6. Contrast the position of the gentile 'fearers of God' of Hellenistic times vis-à-vis their Jewish mentors.

7. It is only in the Christian account of the Abrahamic sanctuary given in the Khūzistānī chronicle (see p. 175, n. 48) that the cult is presented with consistently defensive relativism as the mere veneration of a distinguished ancestor on the part of his faithful descendants.

8. In the fifth century St Euthymius had told his Arab converts that they were no longer sons of Hagar but sons of Sarah, and thus heirs to the promise (Cyril of Scythopolis, 'Vita et res gesta S. P. N. Euthymii', *PG*, vol. cxiv, col. 617; cf. Rom. 9:8, Gal. 4:28). The teaching of the Hagarene prophet was an exact inversion of that of the Christian saint: where Euthymius brought the genealogy into line with the promise, Muḥammad brought the promise into line with the genealogy.

9. Cf. Bamberger, *Proselytism in the Talmudic Period*, p. 163. This is not of course to deny that the tension here analysed in Islam is present in embryo in Judaic attitudes to the proselyte (cf. *ibid.*, pp. 149f).

10. Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, vol. iv. pp. 451f = vol. ii, pp. 480–2.

11. Statements of the type 'The Arabs were ennobled by the Apostle of God' (see below, p. 225, n. 24), by implication give up Abrahamic genealogy as a bad job.

12. Cf. the claim that God chose Ishmael from among the children of Abraham (Ibn Qudāma, *Kitāb al-mughnī*, vol. vii, p. 375; Zayn al-dīn 'Abd al-Raḥmān al-'Irāqī, *al-Qurab fi maḥabbati 'l-'Arab*, ed. I. H. al-Qādirī, Alexandria 1961, p. 92).

13. Cf. the telling Shu'ūbī point that all major prophets before Muḥammad had been non-Arabs (Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, vol. i, p. 155).

14. Cf. Koran 22:66; Kister, 'Ḥaddithū', p. 234, and above, p. 16.

15. Cf. the warning of 'Alī to the Arabs *à propos* of the Ḥamrā' that 'they will beat you at religion in return for your beating them at it in the beginning' (Abū 'Ubayd al-Qāsim b. Sallām, *Gharīb al-ḥadīth*, vol. iii, Hyderabad 1966, p. 484), and the view attributed to Thumāma and Jāḥiẓ according to which the Nabateans have a certain superiority over the Arabs inasmuch as they accepted Islam without

the appearance of a prophet from amongst themselves (J. van Ess, 'Ǧāḥiẓ und die aṣḥāb al-ma'ārif', *Der Islam* 1966, p. 176n).

16. Cf. Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, vol. i, p. 112.

17. Compare the argument of the fourteenth-century Damīrī that the Arabs are the primary authority in a question of ritual practice 'because the faith is Arab' (R. Levy, *The Social Structure of Islam*, Cambridge 1957, pp. 174f) with the tighter rabbinic notion that 'although the Israelites are not prophets, they are the sons of prophets' (Gerhardsson, *Memory and Manuscript*, p. 75n).

18. Cf. the attempts of whole peoples to lay claim to Arab descent (Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, vol. i, pp. 134f; Y. F. Ḥasan, *The Arabs and the Sudan: from the seventh to the early sixteenth century*, Edinburgh 1967, chapter 5).

19. Contrast the ethnic decontamination of Christianity and Buddhism, where the conceptual extrapolation of a universal religion from the way of life of a particular people was sooner or later given concrete reinforcement by the non-adherence of the people whose religion it originally was.

20. See for example Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, I, p. 2216.

21. See for example the latter part of the citation given below, note 24, and Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, vol. i, p. 72.

22. Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Sarakhsī, *Kitāb al-mabsūṭ*, Cairo 1324–31, vol. v, p. 24; Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, vol. i, p. 142.

23. Compare the Judaic notion of 'the merit of the fathers' (Bamberger, *Proselytism in the Talmudic Period*, p. 151).

24. A striking concatenation of the two is provided in 'Umar's account of the principles underlying his organisation of the *dīwān* (Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vol. iii, part one, pp. 212f). He begins by saying of Muḥammad: 'He is our nobility (*sharaf*) and his people are the noblest of the Arabs; for the rest it follows proximity. The Arabs were ennobled by the Apostle of God.' Merit is thus distributed genealogically. But he continues by insisting that, however close one's genealogy may be to that of the Prophet, 'even so, by God, if the non-Arabs should come with works and we should come with none, then they will be closer to Muḥammad than us on the Day of Judgment'. If *sharaf* were profane nobility, tribal or other, we should have a disjunction between the equality of all Muslims as believers and their inequality as members of a this-wordly social structure: as it is we have a dichotomy *within* the concept of their merit as Muslims.

25. Crone, *The Mawālī in the Umayyad Period*, chapter 4.

26. *Ibid.*, chapter 4 and pp. 280, 282.

27. 'Irāqī, *Qurab*, p. 174. When Adam was expelled he spoke Syriac; when he repented he was permitted to speak Arabic again.

28. The legitimist heritage of barbarian kingship so prominent in the history of Europe is thus as absent from Islamic history as imperial traditions.

29. Cf. Wallace-Hadrill, *The Long-Haired Kings*, p. 44. Similarly the ethnic tradition behind the insistence of the Goth Athanaric on being styled 'judge'

and not 'king' found no religious sanction in Christianity (Thompson, *The Visigoths in the time of Ulfila*, p. 46).

30. This character is also in evidence below the level of the central institution: consider the role of the Qurashī provincial governor, set over war and prayer, and established in a residence adjoining the most sacred wall of the mosque with private access thereto (in the words of Ziyād b. Abīhī, 'It is not fitting that the imam should pass through the people', Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, p. 347).

31. D. Sourdel, 'La politique religieuse du calife 'Abbâside Al-Ma'mûn', *Revue des études islamiques* 1963. Note particularly the emphasis on learning.

32. Cf. Gibb's suggestive sketch, 'Some Considerations on the Sunni Theory of the Caliphate', in his *Studies on the Civilization of Islam*.

33. The fact that Islam is so lacking in authority structures in comparison to Christianity is in part a reflection of the organisational decay of Judaism: Christianity broke with Judaism while there was still a Sanhedrin from which Torah went out to all Israel. But it reflects a devolution internal to Hagarism that where the Jewish *metivta* is an academic institution, the Islamic *majlis* is merely an academic occasion.

34. See Goitein, *Studies in Islamic History and Institutions*, p. 205.

35. See W. M. Patton, *Aḥmed ibn Ḥanbal and the Miḥna*, Leyden 1897, especially pp. 141–54.

36. See Talbi, *L'émirat Aghlabide*, pp. 232–46.

37. As late as the caliphate of al-Mahdī, 'Abbāsid doctrine is of a type which by Sunnī standards could only be classed as Rāfiḍī (Nawbakhtī, *Kitāb firaq al-shī'a*, p. 43).

38. *Encyclopaedia of Islam*², art. 'Imāma'.

39. Cf. above, p. 182, n. 35.

40. Madelung, 'The Assumption of the Title Shāhānshāh'; contrast the opposition of religious tradition (in direct inheritance from Judaism) to the title *malik al-amlāk* (*ibid.*, p. 84).

41. M. van Berchem, 'Titres califiens d'Occident', *Journal asiatique* 1907.

42. Examples range from Dawwānī's generous provision of caliphates for all righteous rulers, not excluding his own patron Uzun Ḥasan (A. K. S. Lambton, 'Quis custodiet custodes: Some Reflections on the Persian Theory of Government', *Studia Islamica* 1956 *bis*, part one, p. 146), to the idiosyncratic ambitions of King Faruq (Kedourie, 'Egypt and the Caliphate', in his *The Chatham House Version*). There are of course some partial exceptions, notably Sharifian Morocco.

43. Cf. the celebrated formulation of Ibn Jamā'a cited in attestation of the ripeness of the Middle East for Communist takeover in B. Lewis, 'Communism and Islam', in W. Z. Laqueur (ed.), *The Middle East in Transition*, London 1958, p. 319.

44. Note how the 'mirrors for princes' commend the Sasanid model not so much for itself but as a sort of 'expedient justice', a technique for maintaining the

ecological balance of a settled society (see for example A. K. S. Lambton, 'Justice in the Medieval Persian Theory of Kingship', *Studia Islamica* 1962, pp. 100, 107, 118).

45. Cf. L. Dumont, 'The Conception of Kingship in Ancient India', in his *Religion/Politics and History in India*, Paris/The Hague 1970, p. 80 (on the *Arthaśastra*).

46. The Egyptian papyri bear eloquent testimony to 'Abd al-Malik's Islamisation of the language of the *dīwān*; but its methods and personnel remained obdurately infidel for centuries, a preserve of the Copts glumly excused on grounds of necessity, and from which they were finally ousted only when the practice of Muslim government was itself abrogated by another race of infidels, the British (see D. S. Richards, 'The Coptic Bureaucracy under the Mamlūks', and A. H. Hourani, 'The Syrians in Egypt in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries', p. 228, both in *Colloque International sur l'Histoire du Caire*, Gräfenhainichen n.d.). Compare the dubiously profane and pre-Islamic culture of the 'Abbāsid viziers and the milieu from which they stemmed (Sourdel, *Le Vizirat 'abbāside*, pp. 570ff).

47. Contrast the project put forward by Ibn al-Muqaffa', whereby the caliph would have done for Islamic law what Justinian had done for Roman law.

48. J. R. Levenson, *Confucian China and its Modern Fate*, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1968, vol. ii, part two.

49. Crone, *The Mawālī in the Umayyad Period*, chapter 3. The prominence of merchants and slave-girls is also symptomatic of the demise of aristocracy.

50. *Ibid.* The Romans by contrast only had *mamlūk*s for fun.

51. Cf. J. Dunn, *Modern Revolutions: An Introduction to the Analysis of a Political Phenomenon*, Cambridge 1972, p. 94.

52. Which is not of course to deny the relevance of the Greek model. If Arabic was be differentiated into an Attic and a *koinē*, it required the Greek grammatical tradition to keep them apart; and if the Koran was to be a miracle of stylistic perfection, it required all the sophistry of the Greek rhetorical tradition to show how this was so. (Note how in seventh-century Syria one still learnt *Attic* at Qinneshrin, Michael the Syrian, *Chronique*, vol. iv, p. 447 = vol. ii, p. 475.)

53. Cf. Galen's comments, and in particular his discussion of creation *ex nihilo* as the supreme *acte gratuit* (R. Walzer, *Galen on Jews and Christians*, London 1949, pp. 23–37).

54. Cf. W. D. O'Flaherty, *Asceticism and Eroticism in the Mythology of Śiva*, London 1973.

55. Though not of course one which bears too much thinking about, cf. Job.

56. In so far as Buddhists and Marxists come anywhere remotely near success in this, both of them do so in virtue of a resource outside the universe as it is: what extinction does for Buddhism, the future does for Marxism.

57. Cf. Ghazālī's celebrated observation that the essential condition for a

man to hold a traditonal faith is that he should not know that he is a traditionalist: if the Jewish rabbi who believes *bilā kayf* is a Ghazalian traditionalist, the Muslim rabbi who self-consciously asserts his *balkafa* has lost this grace.

58. G. Makdisi, 'Ibn Taymīya: a Ṣūfi of the Qādiriya Order', *The American Journal of Arabic Studies* 1973. The comforts of mysticism were of course structurally insecure in a religion in which the lost Judaic intimacy could not be restored in the Christian form of mystery.

59. Compare the career opportunities of German nuclear physicists and secret policemen after the Second World War.

60. Ḥunayn b. Isḥāq could win the approval of Ma'mūn by referring to the two *sharī'as*, the Hippocratic and the Nazarene, to which he was subject (Abū 'l-'Abbās Aḥmad b. al-Qāsim ibn Abī Uṣaybi'a, *Kitāb 'uyūn al-anbā' fī ṭabaqāt al-aṭibbā'*, ed. A. Müller, vol. i, Cairo 1882, p. 188). But Ḥunayn was a Christian and Ma'mūn a priest.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 13

1. Cf. above, p. 217, n. 65.

2. For eastern Iran as a series of Hagarene protectorates, see H. A. R. Gibb, *The Arab Conquests in Central Asia*, London 1923. Compare the sanctification by Ma'mūn and Mu'taṣim of a whole range of principalities in eastern Iran through a liberal use of *walā'* (here of *islām* – Balādhurī, *Futūḥ*, pp. 430ff), which later declined into a mere face-saving device for caliphal use vis-à-vis the Būyid Shahanshahs (Madelung, 'The Assumption of the Title Shāhānshāh', p. 105).

3. Cf. the persistence of the religious flavour of the native polity in Usrūshana, despite the nominal conversion of the dynasty, as it appears in the trial of the Afshīn (Ṭabarī, *Ta'rīkh*, III, pp. 1309–13).

4. It is of course true that Khārijism combines a warmth towards the gentiles with an acceptance of the imamate, a combination reminiscent of Shī'ism. But in each case the Judaic puritanism of the movement overrode this cultural potential. In the first place, the accommodating attitude of the Khārijites towards the gentiles was a matter of ethnic identity, not culture: so Khārijism appealed to the Berber tribesmen and the bandits of Sīstān, but had little in the way of cultural syncretism to offer the civilised populations of Ifrīqiya or Transoxania. In the second place, the Khārijite treatment of the imamate minimised its capacity to act as a cultural fulcrum: the Khārijite imamate is not embedded in a sacred lineage, and in the Ibāḍī case at least (the only one which matters historically) it is hedged about by the rabbinical pattern of the Baṣran ghetto. It is the Rustumid imamate of Tāhart which goes farthest towards emancipation from these constraints: an Iranian royal lineage provides a certain substitute for 'Alids, and the partial reception of Mu'tazilism among the North African Ibāḍīs ekes out the parallel with Shī'ism. But it isn't much: a Berber ecology and a Khārijite doctrine hardly suggest a mixture from which even Iranian imams could have elicited a civilisation.

5. Being a residue of Christianity, Ṣūfism was culturally more receptive than

orthodox Islam; but being a residue of Christianity in *Islam*, the cultural naturalisation it could contrive amounted only to a second-class citizenship.

6. In political terms the Israelite high-priesthood had of course seen better days: cf. the appointment of Simon Maccabaeus as 'high priest, generalissimo and ethnarch' of his people (I Mac. 14:41).

7. M. J. Kister, 'On the papyrus of Wahb b. Munabbih', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 1974, p. 563.

8. Cf. the Shī'ite partiality for the principle that 'Arabic is not the father of any one of you but only a language' (see for example Abū Ḥanīfa al-Nu'mān b. Muḥammad al-Tamīmī al-Maghribī, *Da'ā'im al-islām*, ed. A. Fayḍī, Cairo 1951–60, vol. ii, no. 729). This way of thinking finds concrete embodiment in the Shī'ite rejection of the legal principle of *kafā'a* among Muslims (E. Griffini (ed.), "*Corpus Iuris*" *di Zaid ibn 'Alī*, Milan 1919, pp. 199f; Muḥammad b. Ya'qūb al-Kulīnī, *Kitāb al-kāfī*, ed. A. A. al-Ghaffārī, Tehran 1954–7, vol. v, pp. 339–45; Abū 'l-Qāsim Ja'far b. al-Ḥasan al-Muḥaqqiq al-Ḥillī, *Sharā'i' al-islām*, ed. A. M. 'Alī, Najaf 1969, vol. ii, p. 299; Nu'mān, *Da'ā'im*, vol. ii, pp. 196f). Compare also the tradition that 'Alī found no superiority for the children of Ishmael over the children of Isaac in the Book of God (Kulīnī, *Kitāb al-kāfī*, vol. viii, p. 69).

9. The latter aptly equipped with a lengthy epic bearing the title *Mukhtārnāma*.

10. Such a world is of course beyond the reach of footnotes; but one doubts whether even there a Fāṭimid caliph could have tolerated a *dā'ī* who perpetuated the cult of an Indian idol (S. M. Stern, 'Ismā'īlī Propaganda and Fatimid Rule in Sind', *Islamic Culture* 1949, pp. 299f).

11. There is nothing automatically rabbinical about a tribal heritage: that of the Hebrews did not prevent Solomon installing a tribal deity with a tendency to vagrancy in a civilised temple forming an integral part of the palace complex. It is the displacement of the cultural license of the priesthood by the bleak recognition of intractable fact embodied in the rabbinic notion of 'necessity' that gives the Islamic polity its moral intractability (for the *ḍarūra* of the lawyers, see Schacht, *An Introduction to Islamic Law*, p. 84).

12. For the priestly status of the Umayyads, see above, p. 178, n. 71, on the title *khalīfat allāh*. Cf. also Ghazzālī's reference to *al-umawiyya min al-imāmiyya* (I. Goldziher, *Streitschrift des Ġazālī gegen die Bāṭinijja-Sekte*, Leyden 1916, text p. 14).

13. Grabar, *The Formation of Islamic Art*, especially pp. 45–8, 160–2.

14. See above, p. 226, n. 37.

15. B. Lewis, 'The regnal titles of the first Abbasid Caliphs', in *Dr. Zakir Husain Presentation Volume*, New Delhi 1968.

16. For the *ahl al-dawla* and *abnā' al-dawla* as an abortive service aristocracy, see Crone, *The Mawālī in the Umayyad Period*, chapter 3.

17. Cf. above, p. 228, n. 2.

18. For the 'Treasury of Wisdom' of Hārūn and the 'House of Wisdom' of Ma'mūn, where the wisdom of the Greeks was rendered into Arabic, see *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*², art. 'Bayt al-ḥikma'; for Ma'mūn's involvement in the articulation of an Islamic theology, see Sourdel, 'La politique religieuse du calife 'Abbâside Al-Ma'mûn'.

19. It was not of course only Greek truths to which Shī'ism could be more receptive: it is characteristic that it is in the literature of the Imāmīs and Ismā'īlīs that Arabic versions of the Pahlavi Buddha story are preserved (D. Gimaret, *Le livre de Bilawhar et Būḍāsp selon la version arabe ismaélienne*, Paris 1971, pp. 27–32).

20. W. Madelung, 'Imâmism and Mu'tazilite Theology', in Fahd, *Le Shî'isme imâmite*; *id.*, *al-Qāsim* (it is ironic that the reception of Mu'tazilism should be a feature of mountain rather than Kūfan Zaydism, *ibid.*, pp. 80, 158f). There is of course a further significance to this *rapprochement of* Shī'ism and Mu'tazilism: the old Sadducee hostility towards the oral tradition of the Pharisees had returned via its Karaite avatar to the priestly fold. The full adoption of Mu'tazilism into Zaydism, as opposed to Imāmism, is thus matched by the virtual absence of a *Zaydiyya akhbāriyya*.

21. S. M. Stern, 'Abu 'l-Qāsim al-Busti and his refutation of Ismā'ilism', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 1961, pp. 21–3. Cf. the failure of the Muṭarrifiyya to incorporate a comparable philosophy into Zaydism (Madelung, *al-Qāsim*, pp. 201–3).

22. S. M. Stern, 'New Information about the Authors of the "Epistles of the Sincere Brethren"', *Islamic Studies* 1964. This syncretic ambition is not without grandeur as an attempt to restore the integrity of the 'great chain of being' in an Islamic universe. It is also not without fatuousness as an attempt to blend incompatibles: the astrological heritage of the Chaldeans plays down the meaning of particular political events, the messianic promise of the Jews plays it up, and the reductable cycles of redemption generated by the conflation of the two traditions are both intellectually and emotionally incoherent (cf. Y. Marquet, 'Les Cycles de la souveraineté selon les épitres des Iḫwân Al-Ṣafâ", *Studia Islamica* 1972). Compare the Marxist concept of revolution.

23. Compare Marqah's opposition of 'the priests' or 'the Levites' to 'the people' (*'ammah*, see *Memar Marqah*, pp. 60, 63 = 94, 99).

24. For the identification of what came to be considered orthodox Islam with the *'āmma*, compare the dismissal of the traditionist scholars by their enemies as the *ḥashw al-'āmma* (see for example Madelung, *al-Qāsim*, p. 151) and the counter-accusation levelled against the Mu'tazilites of *takfīr al-'awāmm* (J. van Ess, *Die Erkenntnislehre des 'Aḍudaddīn al-Īcī*, Wiesbaden 1966, p. 49).

25. Madelung, *al-Qāsim*, pp. 35 (the Zaydīs and Mu'tazilism), 202 (the Muṭarrifiyya and philosophy); Marquet, 'Imâmat, Résurrection et Hiérarchie selon les Ikhwân as-Safâ', p. 68 (the *Epistles* and astrology; compare the late Musta'lian identification of the *Epistles* as the *qur'ān al-a'imma* cited in Stern, 'New Information', p. 417).

26. Consider the very different relationship between Islam and its predecessors which a scriptural canon comprising Torah, Gospel and Koran would have implied.

27. Note for example the evolution towards a more civil attitude towards the Companions of the Prophet (Kohlberg, *The Attitude of the Imāmī-Shī'īs*, pp. 111–22), and to non-Imāmī Muslims in general (*ibid.*, pp. 104–8); cf. also the shift away from an embarrassingly heterodox doctrine regarding the integrity of the Koran (*id.*, 'Some Notes on the Imamite Attitude to the Qur'ān', in S. M. Stern *et al.* (eds.), *Islamic Philosophy and the Classical Tradition*, Oxford 1972).

28. I. Goldziher, 'Das Prinzip der *taḳijja* im Islam', *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 1906; note particularly the way in which the Imāmī jurists present *taqiyya* as a duty owed to one's *coreligionists* (*ibid.*, pp. 219–21).

29. Cf. the view attributed to Hishām b. al-Ḥakam: the imam is not expected to revolt, and it is impermissable to rebel on his behalf (*Encyclopaedia of Islam*², *s.n.*). Not that this in itself goes against the grain of priestly politics: except in its proudest Maccabean moments, the Israelite high-priesthood had been accustomed to coexist with a more or less alien and oppressive *sulṭān*.

30. For the uncompromising finality of the Imāmī *ghayba*, see J. Eliash, 'The Ithnā 'asharī-Shī'ī juristic theory of political and legal authority', *Studia Islamica* 1969. The point of the Imāmī *ghayba* comes out rather neatly in the fact that it has twice been invoked, in very different contexts, to terminate an unwanted line of Ismā'īlī imams (S. M. Stern, 'The Succession to the Fatimid Imam al-Āmir, the Claims of the Later Fatimids to the Imamate, and the Rise of Ṭayyibī Ismailism', *Oriens* 1951, pp. 204f; W. Ivanow, 'The Sect of Imam Shah in Gujarat', *Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 1936, pp. 43–5). Compare the occlusion of the messiah, and consequently of any potential for activist politics, among another urban religious minority, the early Christians.

31. Cf. the insistence in the period following the disappearance of the imam that the faithful should neither mention his name nor enquire as to his whereabouts because of the risk to the lives of the imam *and his community* (Nawbakhtī, *Kitāb firaq al-shī'a*, p. 92).

32. Where Imāmism concentrates the imamate in a single and ultimately discontinued line of inactive imams, Zaydism distributes the right to initiate the imamate by righteous rebellion among all minimally qualified members of the Prophetic lineage (cf. the convenient statement of the rules of the game reproduced in R. Strothmann, *Das Staatsrecht der Zaiditen*, Strassburg 1912, pp. 104–6). Where Imāmism empties the present of political meaning in favour of an indefinitely distant mahdic future, Zaydism makes its sturdily realistic offer of imamic justice here and now (with a single exception, mountain Zaydism is strikingly free of mahdism, see Madelung, *al-Qāsim*, pp. 198–201). Where Imāmism interprets *jihād* as a self-effacing concealment of its secrets from other Muslims (Goldziher, 'Das Prinzip', p. 221n), Zaydism interprets it as an armed struggle against them (C. van Arendonk, *Les débuts de l'imāmat zaidite au Yemen*,

Leyden 1960, p. 225). Where Imāmism harps on the Koranic dispensation in favour of the believer who denies God under compulsion but remains faithful in his heart (16:108, see for example Kohlberg, *The Attitude of the Imāmī-Shī'īs*, p. 328), Zaydism finds its sanction in the Koranic dispensation in favour of those who take up arms because they have been unjustly persecuted (22:39, see for example S. M. Stern, 'The Coins of Āmul', *The Numismatic Chronicle* 1967, pp. 211f, 217).

33. Note the neat retrojection of this ecological contrast onto the career of the Prophet: where Imāmism picks out his Meccan career as the prototype for the beleaguered quietism of an urban ghetto (see above, p. 183, n. 38, and Abū Khalaf Sa'd b. 'Abdallāh al-Qummī, *Kitāb al-maqālāt wa 'l-firaq*, ed. M. J. Mashkour, Tehran 1963, p. 103), Zaydism takes his career in Medina as a paradigm of political activism in a tribal society (cf. the imitation of the Prophetic model implied in the use of the terms *muhājirūn* and *anṣār* in connection with the foundation of the Zaydī imamate in the Yemen (van Arendonk, *Débuts*, p. 164), and the neatness of al-Hādī's invocation of the practice of the Prophet in justification of his own somewhat uncanonical treatment of the *zakāt* (*ibid.*, pp. 260f)).

34. The tribal harmony which the founder of the Zaydī imamate in the Yemen was able to establish by the force of sanctity where a secular governor with an army had previously failed is paradigmatic for this style of politics (van Arendonk, *Débuts*, pp. 134f; cf. also pp. 140f). Compare the way in which the same ruler offers his justice to the tribesmen on approval (*ibid.*, pp. 135f).

35. Not that the sacrifice of universality came easily: the first leaders of the Caspian Zaydī polity styled themselves *dā'īs* rather than imams (Madelung, *al-Qāsim*, pp. 154–6), and Zaydism never made the obvious doctrinal adaption to the existence of two widely separated Zaydī polities, adopted by the Ibādīs in analogous circumstances, namely the recognition that there might be more than one legitimate imam at a time (see *ibid.*, pp. 196–8).

36. It should be noted that the brief account given here elides the interesting transition from Kūfan to mountain Zaydism, and sweeps under the carpet the early hesitations of the former.

37. It is significant of this refusal to lower academic standards that more than one Zaydī ruler was denied recognition as imam on grounds of inadequate scholarship (see for example Madelung, *al-Qāsim*, p. 208). As late as the beginning of this century one claimant to the imamate challenged another to a theological debate (R. Bidwell (ed.), *The Affairs of Arabia 1905–6*, London 1971, vol. ii, section viii, p. 4).

38. Compare the 'Abbāsid imamate, which neither tailed off into a parochial imamate in the wilds of Central Asia in the Zaydī manner, nor disappeared into formal occlusion in the Imāmī manner.

39. For the variety of settings in which Ismā'īlism went to work, see S. M. Stern, 'Ismā'īlīs and Qarmaṭians', in Cahen *et al.*, *L'Elaboration de l'Islam*, p. 101.

40. For the ideological gyrations through which the leaders of the movement contrived at different times to take substantial sections of their followers, see W.

Madelung, 'Das Imamat in der frühen ismailitischen Lehre', *Der Islam* 1961, and B. Lewis, *The Assassins: A Radical Sect in Islam*, London 1967, pp. 71–83.

41. Thus the Ṣulayḥids, in the words of one of the sources, 'combined the office of *dā'ī* [*sc.* on behalf of the Fāṭimid imam] with sovereign rule [*sc.* within the Yemen]' (Stern, 'The Succession to the Fatimid Imam al-Āmir', pp. 217–19).

42. As in the case of 'Alī b. al-Faḍl in the Yemen. The aparatchiks of course could do the same thing at the centre, as in the case of the Fāṭimids themselves.

43. Thus the Makramid *dā'īs* in the Yemen might just as well have been Zaydī imams; or alternatively, the hidden imams they represented might just as well have been deposited by their Bohrā adherents in a thorough-going Imāmī *ghayba*.

44. For Kirmānī the promise of the future reduces to the faintly appalling prospect of another thirty-odd Fāṭimid caliphs (Madelung, 'Das Imamat', p. 126).

45. *Baṭalat al-amthāl bi-ẓuhūri 'l-mamthūlāt* (*ibid.*, p. 118).

46. *Ibid.*, pp. 130–2.

47. Lewis, *The Assassins*, pp. 67, 112, 135.

48. 'Wherever you live, be citizens' (H. S. Morris, *The Indians in Uganda*, London 1968, p. 193). We owe our understanding of the cultural adventure of the Aga Khans to a seminar paper given by Professor E. Gellner a few years ago.

49. Babylonian Talmud, *Yoma*, f. 19b.

NOTES TO CHAPTER 14

1. The duty of the Calvinist pastor is 'by bringing men into the obedience of the Gospel, to offer them as it were in sacrifice unto God', and not, 'as the papists have hitherto proudly bragged, by the offering up of Christ to reconcile men unto God' (Calvin cited in M. Walzer, *The Revolution of the Saints: A Study in the Origins of Radical Politics*, London 1966, pp. 24f). Little but the term *islām* is missing here.

2. For Calvinism, see Walzer, *Revolution of the Saints*, pp. 35, 152.

3. What a John Knox briefed by the Zaydīs might have made of the mountain tribes of Scotland, history, which unimaginatively reserved them for Stuart restorationism, does not relate.

4. 'Let them chant while they will of prerogatives, we shall tell them of Scripture; of custom, we of Scripture; of acts and statutes, still of Scripture' (Milton in 1641, cited in Walzer, *Revolution of the Saints*, p. 130).

5. Cf. Avis, 'Moses and the Magistrate: a Study in the Rise of Protestant Legalism'.

6. Walzer, *Revolution of the Saints*, p. 8. Where Islam consecrates the violence of religious war, Calvinism excuses it on grounds of 'reason of religion' (*ibid.*, p. 274).

7. Richard Greenham, cited in Walzer, *Revolution of the Saints*, p. 130; cf. Beza's invocation of the *hijra* of Abraham (*ibid.*, p. 48). Even the wilderness of America was for the Puritan immigrants *a priori* simply a void (P. Miller, *Errand*

into the Wilderness, Cambridge, Mass. 1956, p. 12n), and the second generation was correspondingly obsessed by the problem of the meaning of their society in the wilderness (*ibid.*, p. 10). There was no such categorical problem of meaning for the Zaydīs in the Yemen or the Ibāḍīs in Oman; but then neither of these groups created anything very like the United States.

8. Walzer, *Revolution of the Saints*, pp. 98–100.

9. Consider the proposal for a scripturally based English constitution sent to the mother country in 1659 by John Eliot, the 'apostle to the Indians', with its elaborate scheme based on the tens and hundreds of Ex. 18 (*ibid.*, p. 232). Even in the remotest *dār al-hijra* of the Puritan world, the closest a saint could get to conceiving an intrinsically sacred polity was thus the briskly functional infrastructure adopted by Moses in response to the criticisms of an astute Midianite observer: the Puritans had only the machinery of prophetic government without the prophetic presence which alone gave it religious meaning.

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 68ff.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 101.

12. For this recrudescence of the *hashw al-'āmma* see P. Miller, *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century*, Boston, Mass. 1961, pp. 76ff.

13. Walzer, *Revolution of the Saints*, p. 32. Compare the seventeenth-century Puritan defence of the 'amiable virtues of heathen men' (Miller, *The New England Mind*, p. 82).

14. *Ibid.*, p. 463.

15. Walzer, *Revolution of the Saints*, p. 24.

16. Miller, *The New England Mind*, p. 114.

17. R. Hooykaas, *Humanisme, Science et Réforme*, Leyden 1958, pp. 108–12. The differing fates of the two categories, with their shared tension between Hebraic form and heathenish content, are instructive: in the west philosophy rejected the prophetic vessel, in the east the prophetic vessel rejected medicine.

18. Miller, *The New England Mind*, p. 128.

19. Note how Ramus rejects Aristotelian logic precisely on the ground that it is a mere *musnad* of concepts (*ibid.*, p. 123; cf. above, p. 143).

20. Goldziher, 'Stellung', pp. 40f.

21. Miller, *The New England Mind*, p. 114.

22. So Ramus compared his logic to a Roman emperor administering the whole earth by universal laws (*ibid.*, p. 128); the Graeco-Roman heritage stood together in the west just as it fell together in the east.

23. Cf. Joseph Hall cited in J. M. Dunn, *The Political Thought of John Locke*, Cambridge 1969, p. 226n.

24. Walzer, *Revolution of the Saints*, p. 76.

25. Cf. J. M. Dunn, 'Justice and the interpretation of Locke's political theory', *Political Studies* 1968, pp. 76n, 83f.

26. Consider the changing functional equivalence of Calvinism and Stoicism. When the two spread in parallel fashion among the French nobility of the sixteenth century, we have Calvinism taking on the role of the philosophy of a conscientious elite so characteristic of Roman Stoicism (Walzer, *Revolution of the Saints*, p. 61); but when the new military drill so prized by the Calvinists for its exquisite godliness is commended as a means of inculcating Stoic virtues in the ordinary soldiery, we have Stoicism taking on the role of an ideology of congregational discipline so characteristic of Calvinism (*ibid.*, p. 287).

27. If even the Amerindians were to be assailed by Ramist logic in the name of God, the godly fantasy of Locke whereby every English labourer would spend six hours a day in cognitive effort seems moderation itself (Dunn, *The Political Thought of John Locke*, p. 231).

28. Or to put it slightly differently, where Islam can only reduce politics to economics, Europe has elevated economics into politics.

29. This patching up had of course begun already in antiquity, but there were few attempts to put an end to it in Islam.

30. Cf. Pines, *Beiträge zur islamischen Atomenlehre*, especially p. 74.

31. The tendency for mathematics to decay into *ḥurūfiyya* is clear already in Kindī (Rescher, *Studies in Arabic Philosophy*, p. 6).

32. *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*[2], arts. 'Ḥurūf ('ilm al-)' and 'Djafr'. A similar style of numerical speculation was of course *available* to Galileo (A. Koyré, *Metaphysics and Measurement: Essays in Scientific Revolution*, London 1968, p. 40n).

33. Cf. Philo's rejection of the Stoic view that God attends only to great matters (H. A. Wolfson, *Religious Philosophy: A Group of Essays*, Cambridge, Mass. 1961, p. 8).

34. Walzer, *Revolution of the Saints*, p. 35.

35. Cf. West, *Early Greek Philosophy*, p. 97.

36. I.e. not to the Bible (R. Hooykaas, *Religion and the Rise of Modern Science*, Edinburgh and London 1972, p. 118). Compare Kepler's view of the astronomer as a lay priest of God in the book of nature (M. Caspar, *Kepler*, London and New York 1959, pp. 375f).

37. Cf. also the changed relationship between theoretical and practical knowledge: previously segregated as concerned with the immutable laws and the sublunar world respectively, they came together with practice redefined as applied theory. *Both* were henceforth to be judged by their fruits, a demand incomprehensible in a classical context (N. Lobkowicz, *Theory and Practice: History of a Concept from Aristotle to Marx*, London 1967, pp. 89f).

38. Goitein, *Studies in Islamic History and Institutions*, pp. 218f.

39. Cf. above, p. 101.

40. Cf. Jacob Wimpheling's typically nationalist invocation of the gentile character of Christianity: if the German conversion to Christianity at the hands

of the Romans were an argument for the inordinate efflux of German money to Rome, then by the same token the Romans, who converted at the hands of a Palestinian Jew, should be sending remittances to Syria (G. Strauss, *Manifestations of Discontent in Germany on the Eve of the Reformation*, Bloomington, Ind. 1971, p. 42).

41. *Ibid.*, chapter 3; F. Hotman, *Francogallia*, ed. and tr. R. E. Giesey and J. H. M. Salman, Cambridge 1972, editorial introduction.

42. The Islamic wilderness was thus preempted by the religion; the European wilderness by contrast would not bloom for the Puritans, but in compensation was still there to be reclaimed by the secular Romantics.

43. The programme of the Kadızadeists of seventeenth-century Istanbul, as one of their enemies pointed out, implied stripping the Ottomans to the bare buttocks to clothe them in loin-cloths in the manner of the desert Arabs (L. V. Thomas, *A Study of Naima*, New York 1972, p. 109). It is thus appropriate that the fundamentalists took their critic at his word and made their next appearance in the eighteenth-century Najd; just as it is unsurprising that Kâtib Chelebi's Ishrāqism provided scant shelter for an Ottoman Renaissance, and that Turkish nationalism was a product of the twentieth century.

44. It is striking that in both these civilisations Buddhism has come and gone without leaving any very poignant sense of cultural loss.

45. Islamic law thus occupies an intermediate position between Pharisaic law (whether in the stricter *madhhab* of Bet Shammai or the more lenient version of Bet Hillel) and antinomianism (whether combined with the letter of another religious law, as with the Fāṭimid reception of the substantive law of the Imāmīs, or with a wholely secular law, as with the Christian acceptance of Rome). (We are indebted to Dr E. Kohlberg for this characterisation of Fāṭimid law.)

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